

Chess Movies™ 2

The Means and Ends

by Bruce Pandolfini



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**by
Bruce Pandolfini**

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The Means and Ends

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Introduction: *Chess Movies*® 2

In the first book of the Chess Movies® series, the opening was featured. The material consisted of games finishing in nine moves or fewer. The games hinged on traps or surprising ways to exploit blunders and inexact moves. In this second offering of the series, the focus is on the endgame. Like in *Chess Movies*® 1: *Quick Tricks*, all the examples in *Chess Movies*® 2: *The Means and Ends* are drawn from actual play. But there's more to it.

Arranged in chronological order from 1789 to 2007, the endings contained herein are not merely the conclusions of real games. Each illustration terminates in a position that is checkmate or on the verge of checkmate. Additionally intriguing are the players responsible for the victories. For the most part the games have been played by the best players in the world, often against each other. Here we can relive the final moves of some of the most exciting battles of all time. Indeed, among the inclusions are positions drawn from classic world championship matches. They underscore a great truth: that even the very best players can fall for checkmate. We can watch, for instance, how Alekhine cornered Capablanca in a hopeless pin (example 18) or the way Smyslov set up Botvinnik, luring him into a devilish snare where checkmate could not be averted (example 27).

Although such examples, some drawn from rapid contests, often revolve around tactical play, we still get to see strategic endgame principles put to good use. Whether the win is achieved by a rook on the seventh rank, the better positioned king, the advance of a dangerous passed pawn, or the constrictive power of a more centralized queen, most of the wins accomplished herein are brought about by the timely interplay of strategy and tactics. But judge for yourself, and while you're at it, sit back and enjoy the show.

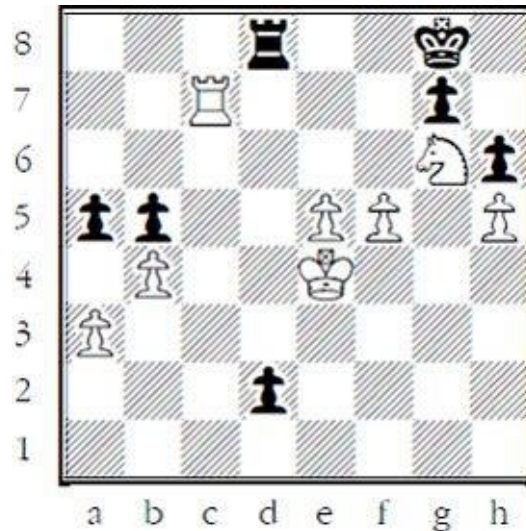
Bruce Pandolfini

New York, NY

April 2011

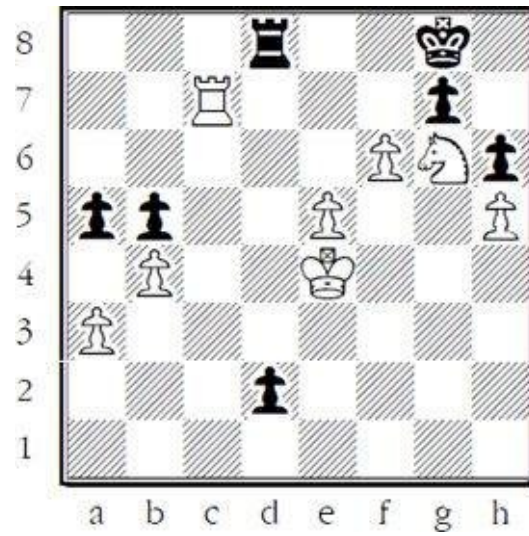
(1) Philidor vs. Wilson, 1789

White is up a knight



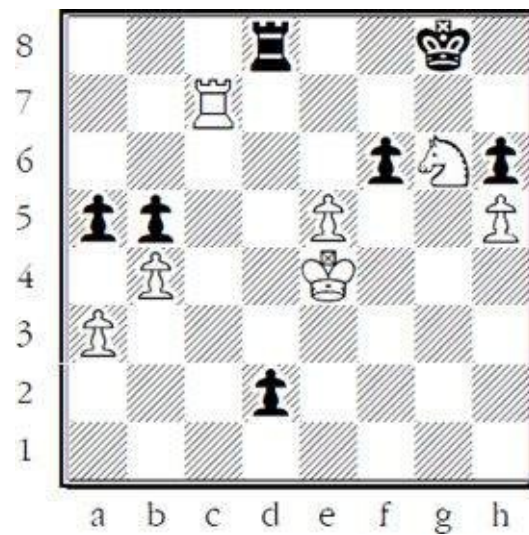
When up a piece, normally the winning strategy would be to simplify. This is easy enough, assuming White can stop the lusting d-pawn. Let's assume that White can't stop the advancing pawn. What then? Well, if you can't stop them, or join them, maybe you can mate them. Yes, having reached the above position, that's apparently what Philidor had in mind, either that or an opera score he was working on.

1.f6!



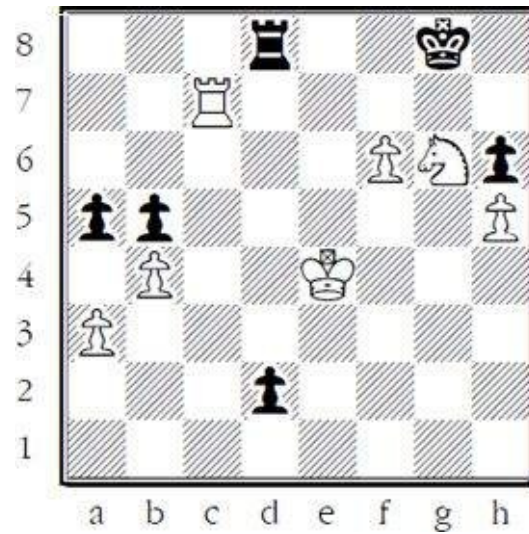
So, Philidor *was* thinking about chess. The biggest threat is mate at g7.

1...gxf6



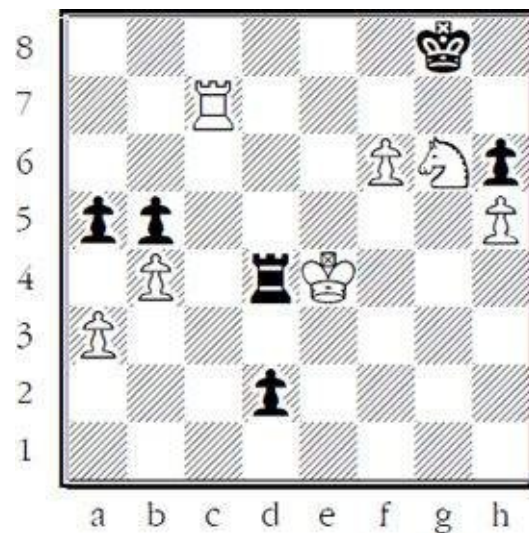
This capture temporarily stops the mate.

2.exf6



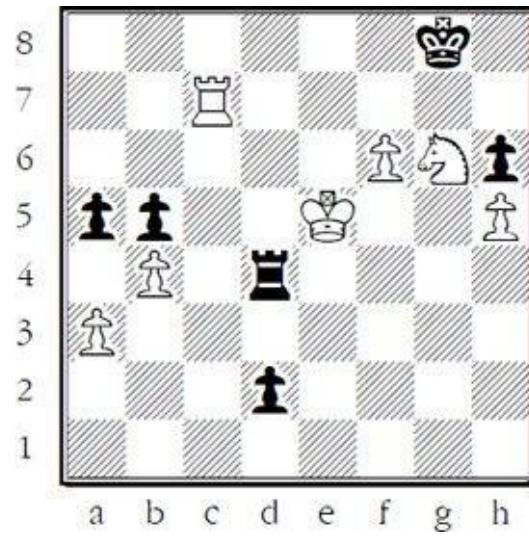
Once again there's a mate threat at g7. White's rook dominates the seventh rank.

2...Rd4+



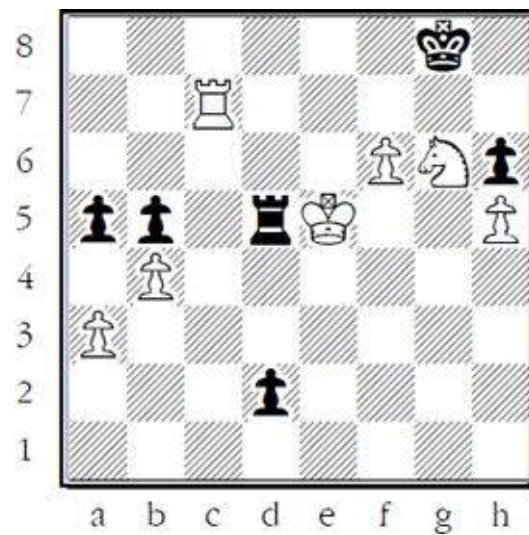
If 3.Kxd4??., then the pawn promotes with check, 3...d1/Q+.

3.Ke5



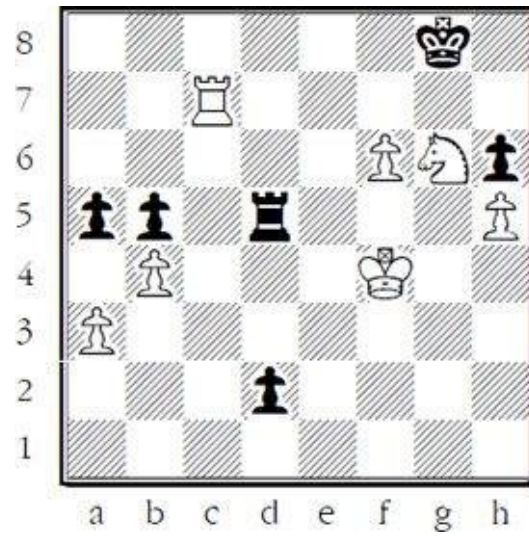
White is looking for a way to escape the checks.

3...Rd5+



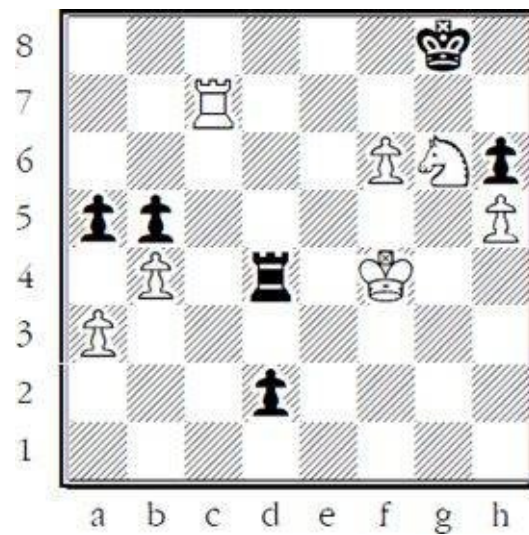
Again, the rook shouldn't be captured.

4.Kf4



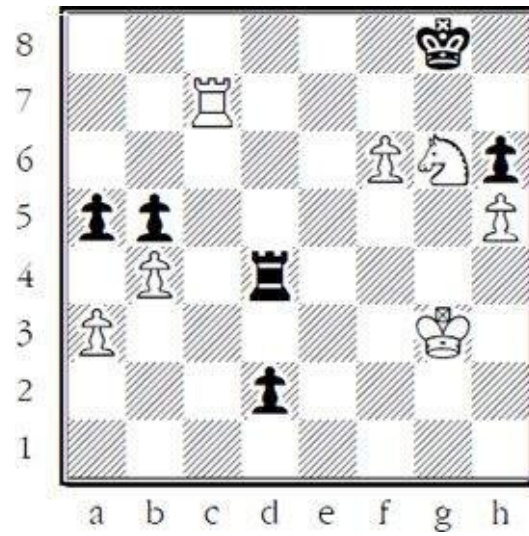
White sees an end to these annoying checks. The king will hide at g2 or h2.

4...Rd4+



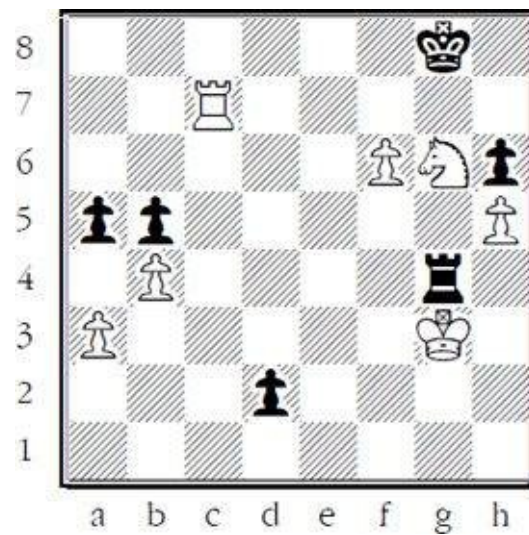
Black is still hoping.

5.Kg3



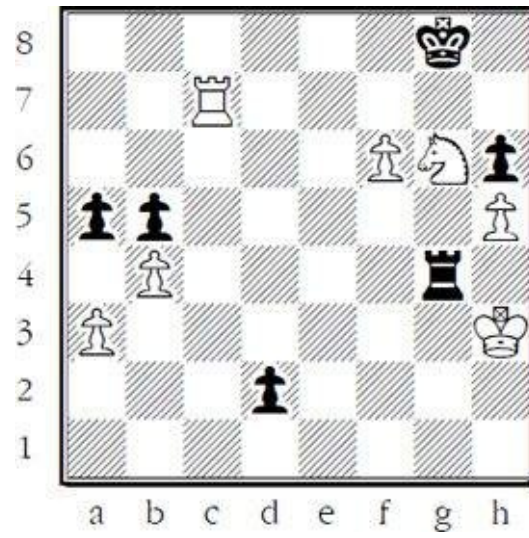
But not 5.Kf3??, when the pawn queens with check.

5...Rg4+!



A last ditch try: taking the rook allows Black to queen with check.

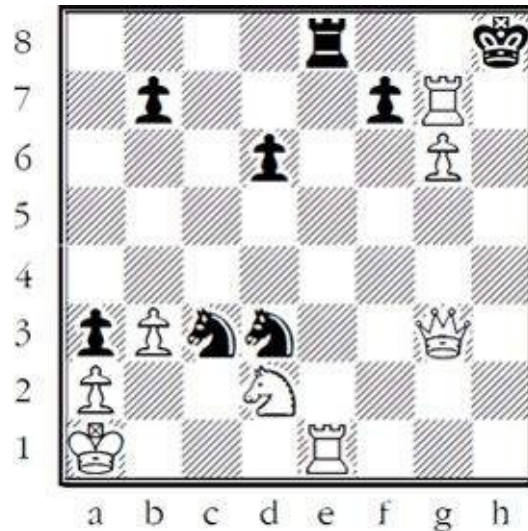
6.Kh3



Any check leads to the rook's capture. Otherwise, White's rook soon mates. (1–0)

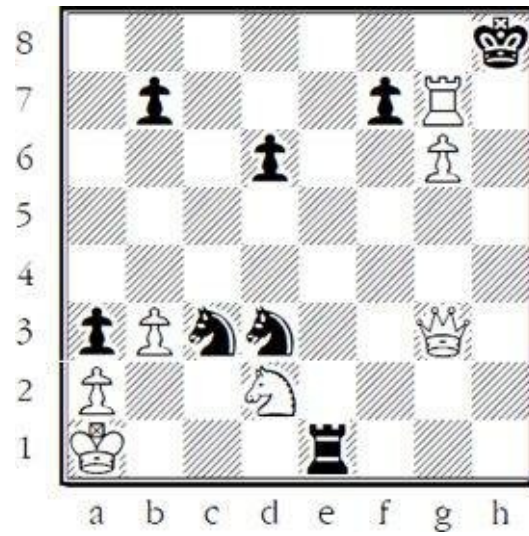
(2) LaBourdonnais vs. McDonnell, 1834

Black is down the Exchange for a pawn



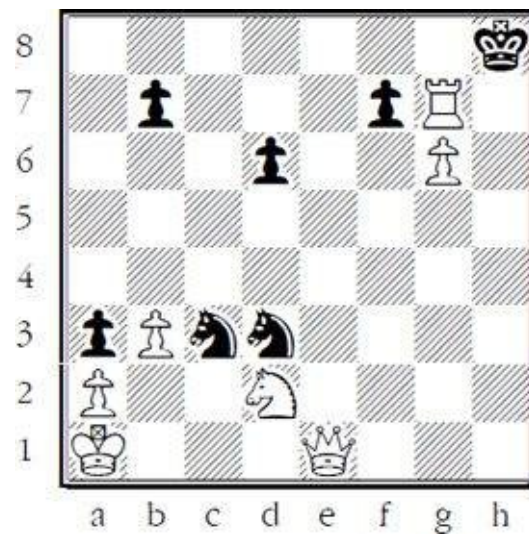
In this wild transitional position, before endgame features have become clear, having the move could be practically everything. Here, Black is down a queen, but not for long. And after winning it back, a new threat emerges, and this time it centers on the white king. In the end, White's position can't be saved. Black's knights are simply too murderous.

1...Rxe1+



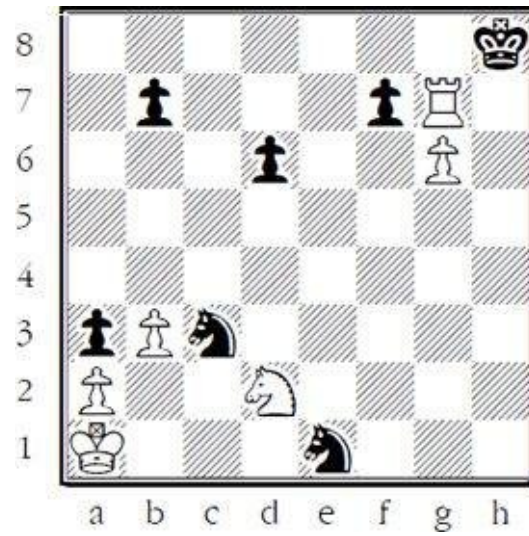
This forces White to cede his own queen.

2.Qxe1



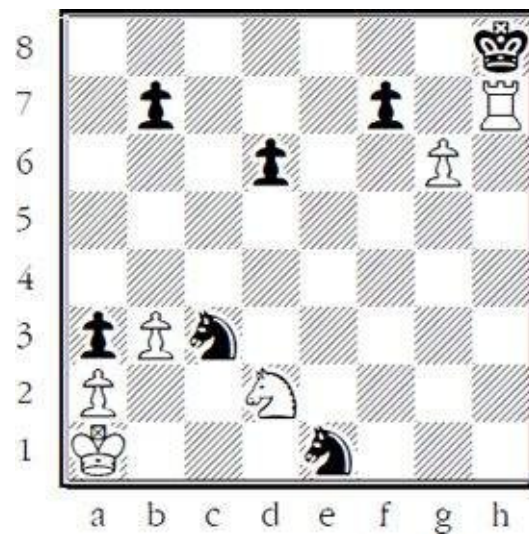
With the queens gone, perhaps White thought he would now be okay.

2...Nxe1



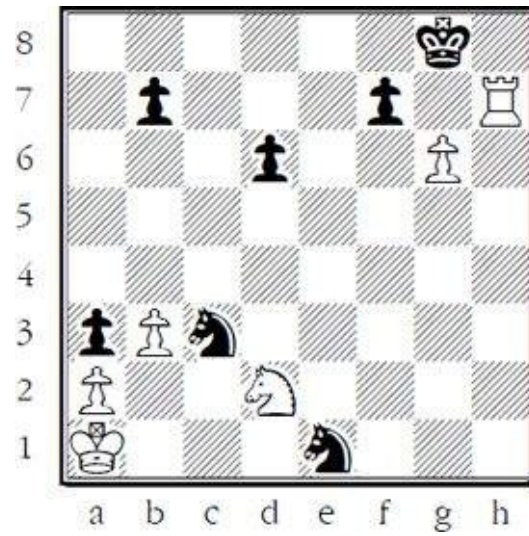
Not so fast. The lowly knight at e1 is menacing mate at c2.

3.Rh7+



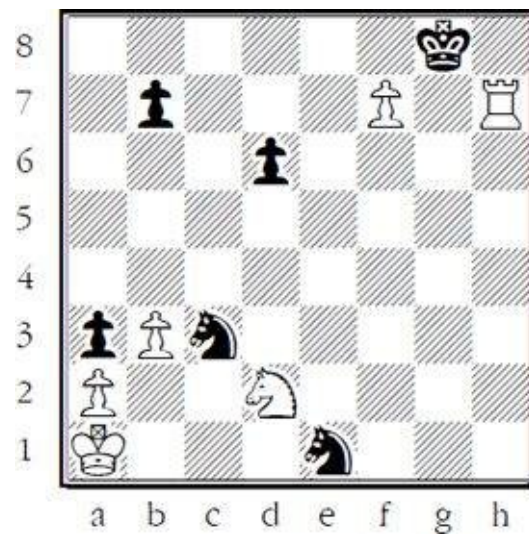
This saves the rook, for now.

3...Kg8



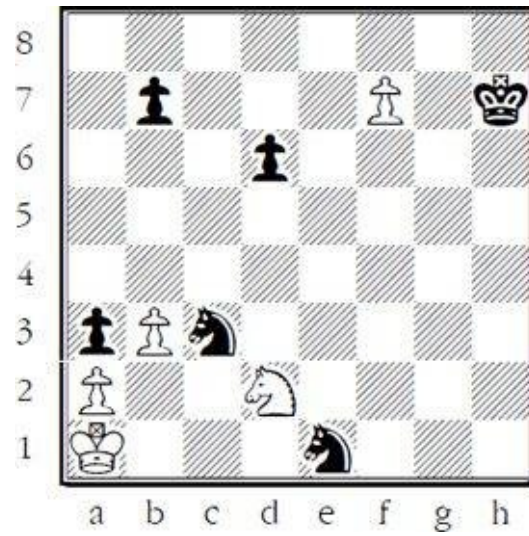
Quite frustratingly, White's knight prevents the rook from defending at h2.

4.gxf7+



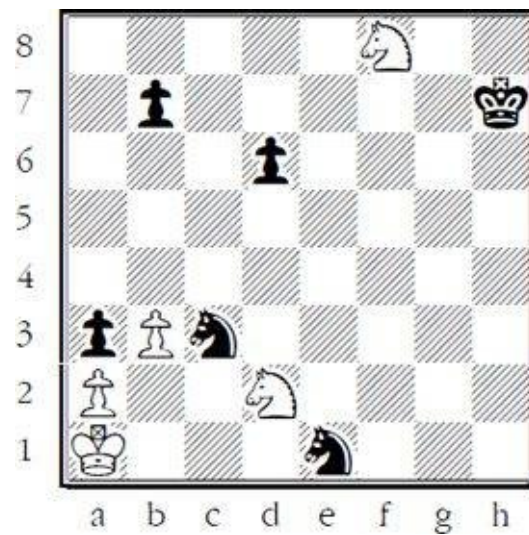
So White keeps the checks going.

4...Kxh7



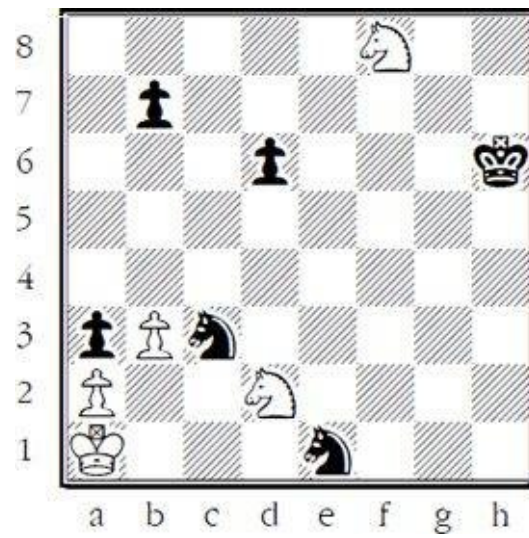
It's a free rook, since 5.f8/Q loses to 5...Nc2 mate.

5.f8N+



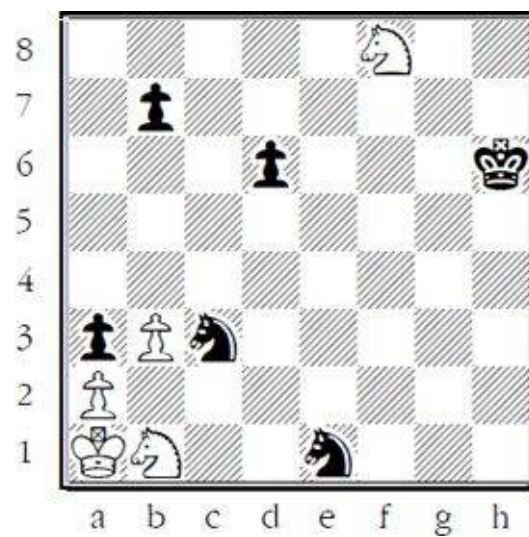
White hopes that Caissa fatefully permits 5...Kg7? 6.Ne6+ and 7.Nd4.

5...Kh6



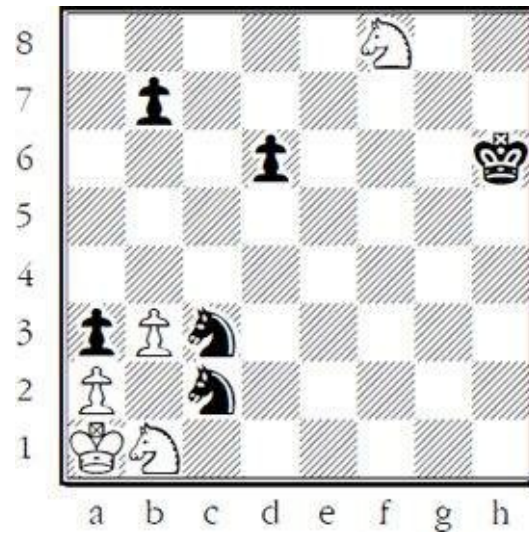
This puts an end to such hopes.

6.Nb1



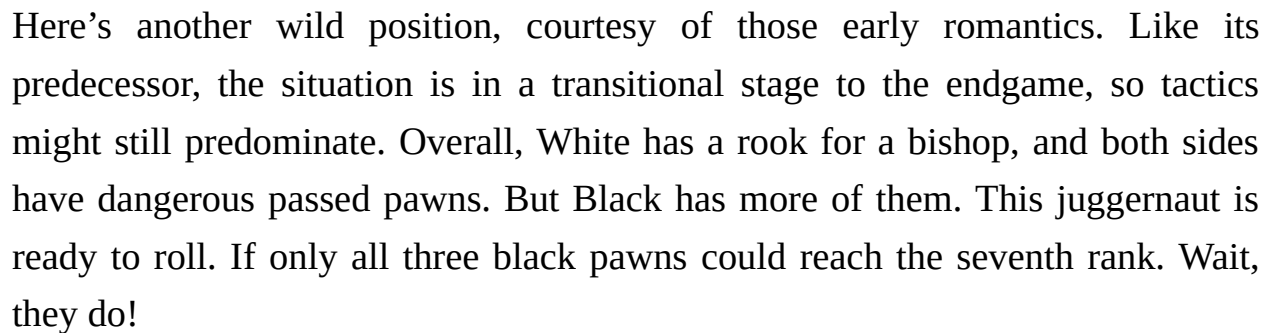
One last hope — that Black plays anything but 6...Nc2 mate.

6...Nc2 mate

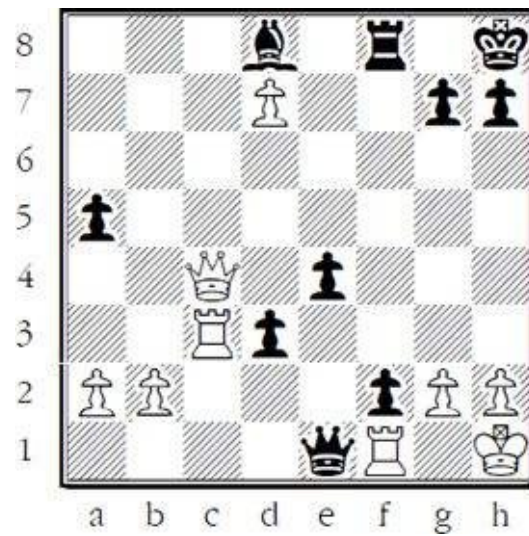


The final position is rather comical, even for these two stalwarts. **(0–1)**

Black is down the Exchange for a pawn

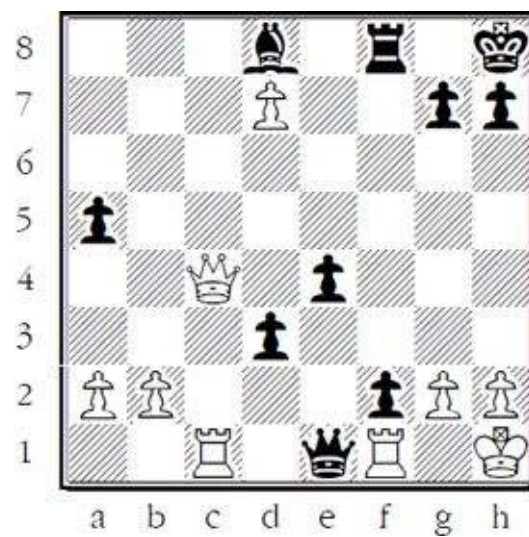


1...Qe1!



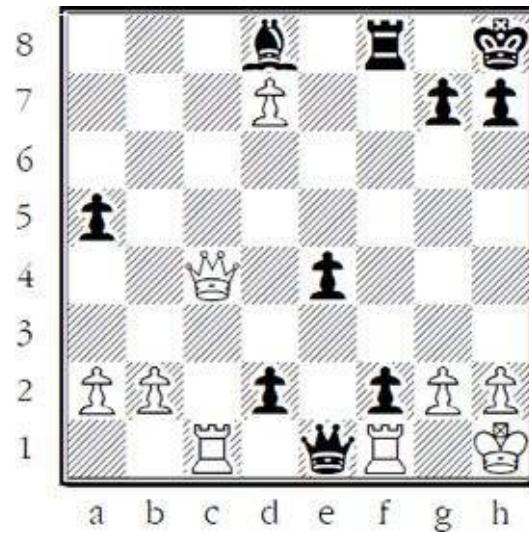
Black wastes no time. The threat is mate and the queen is immune.

2.Rc1



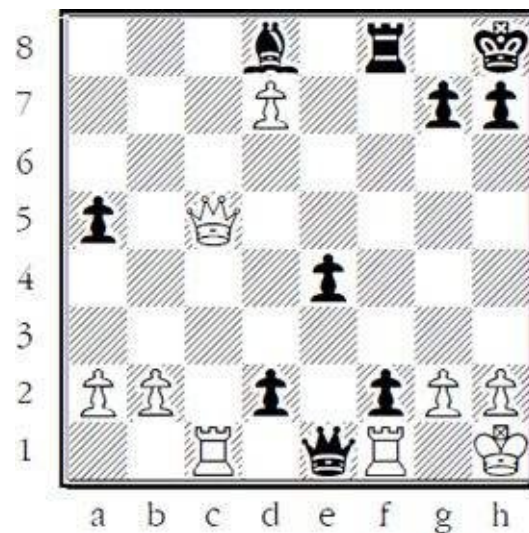
Not much choice here. The rook at f1 had to be defended.

2...d2!



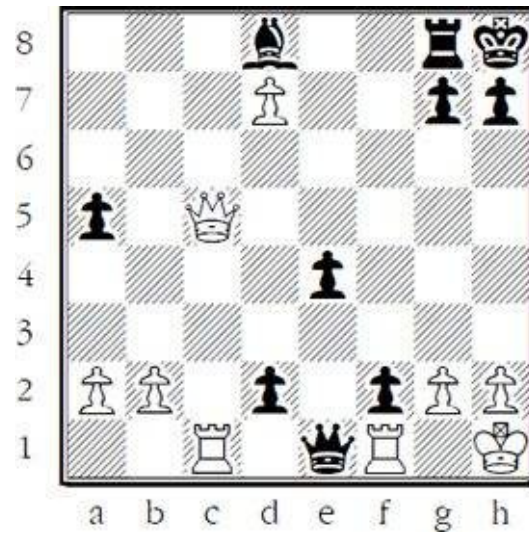
This keeps the queen defended. Now, two black pawns are on the seventh.

3.Qc5



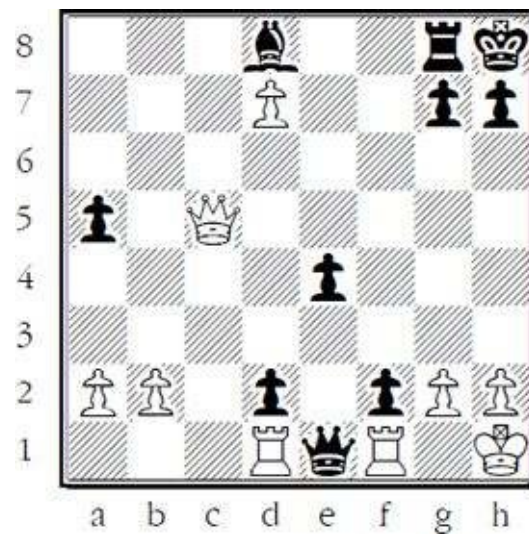
White doesn't know which way to go. So he aims at f8 and f2.

3...Rg8



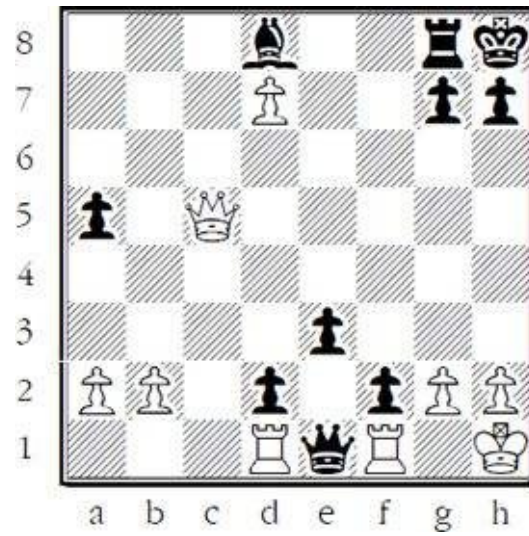
Better safe than sorry. Black secures this rook for good.

4.Rd1



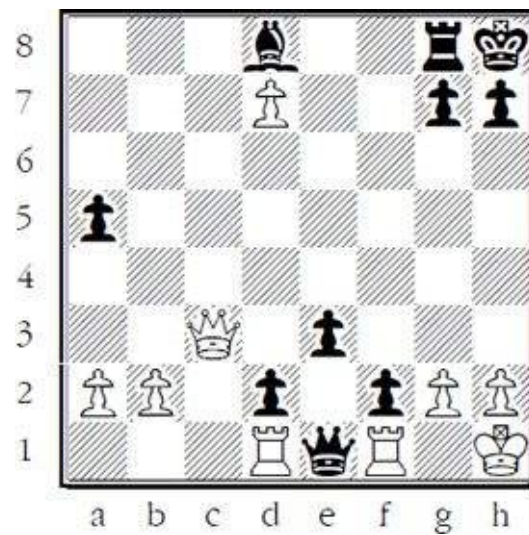
This ensures that White's rooks are safe in turn.

4...e3!



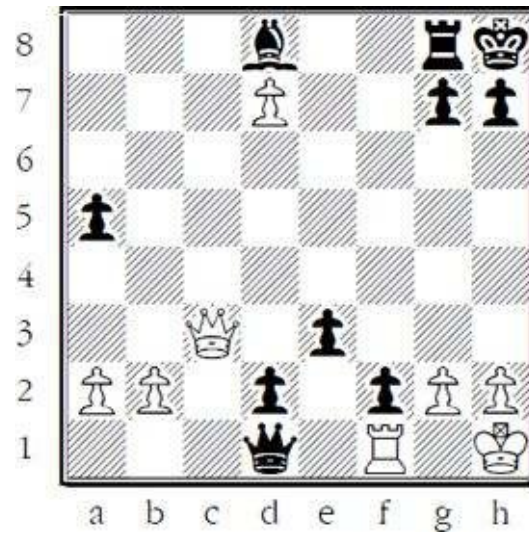
The position is getting symmetrically funnier. There's beauty in pattern.

5.Qc3



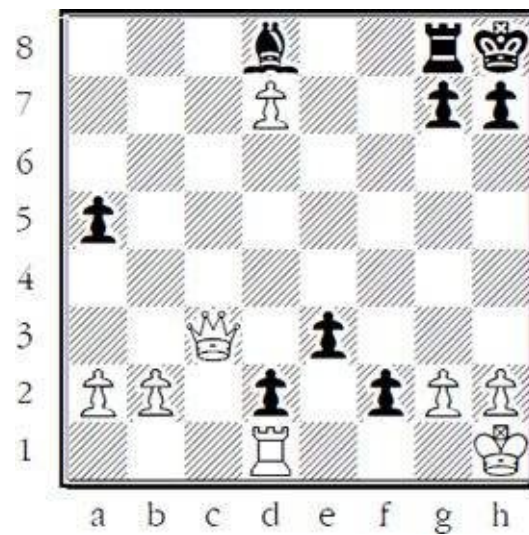
Finally, White is threatening to take Black's queen.

5...Qxd1!



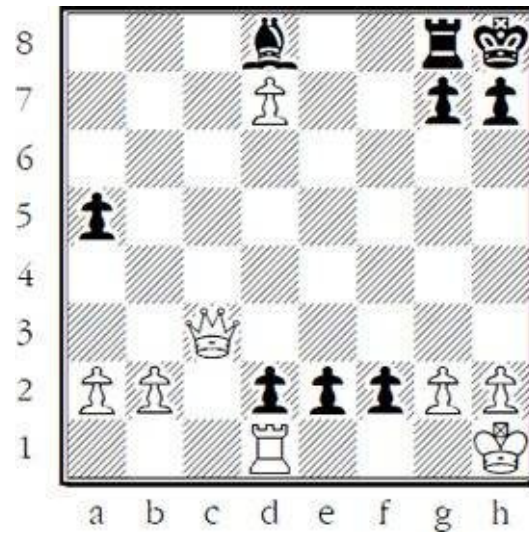
Another bolt from the dark side: White has no practical choice.

6.Rxd1



If only White had two moves in a row.

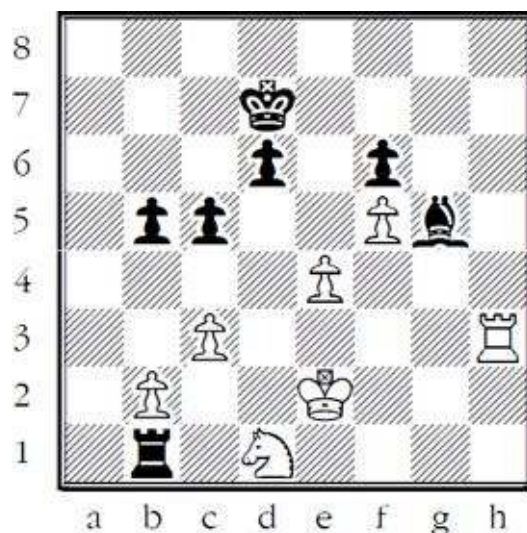
6...e2!



When was the last time you saw three pawns on the seventh? White will soon be mated. **(0-1)**

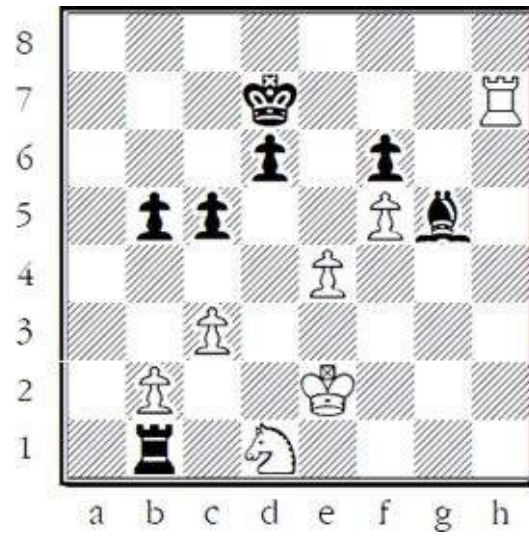
(4) Staunton vs. Cochrane, 1842

White has a knight for a bishop



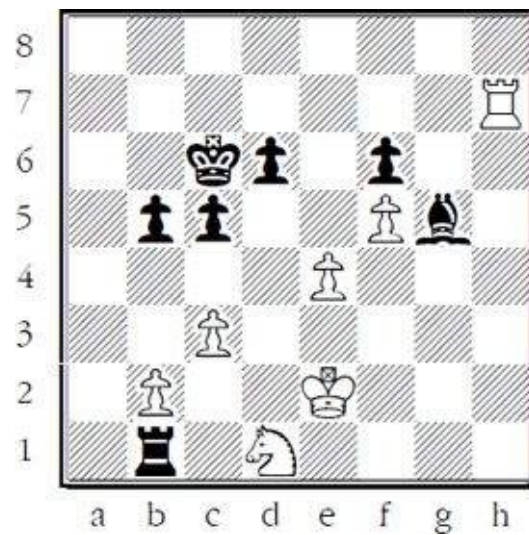
In this even ending, Black's pieces seem adequately placed for aggression. His rook is attacking a pawn and his protected bishop cuts through White's position. But things can happen. Maybe the knight could somehow wend to d5. Possibly White's rook could secure the seventh rank. And, who knows, perhaps Black might walk right into a surprise mating net. Such things have happened before. Why not in this game?

1.Rh7+



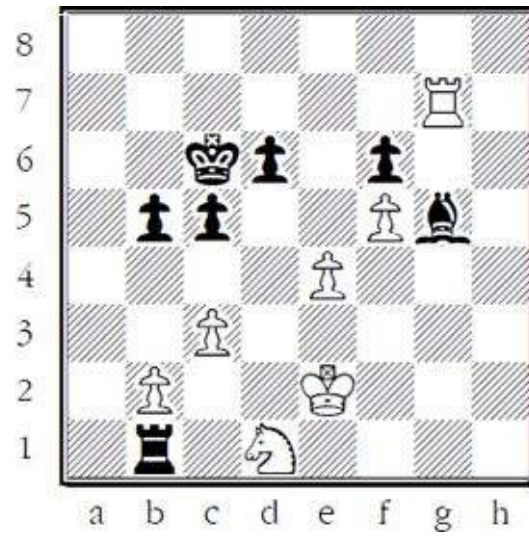
White decides to seize the seventh rank.

1...Kc6



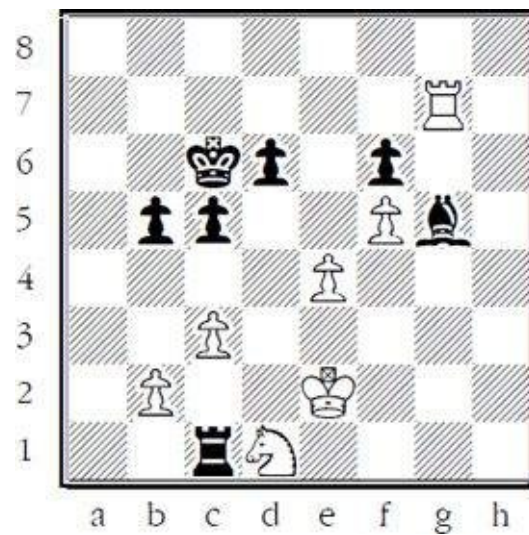
Black chooses a more active square for his king.

2.Rg7



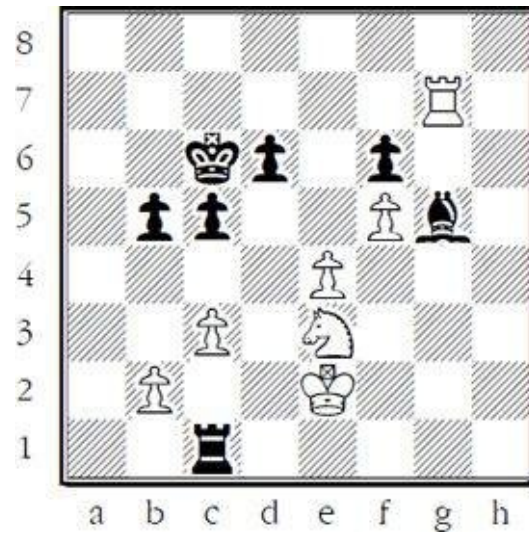
This stops 2...d5 because of the counter 3.e5!.

2...Rc1



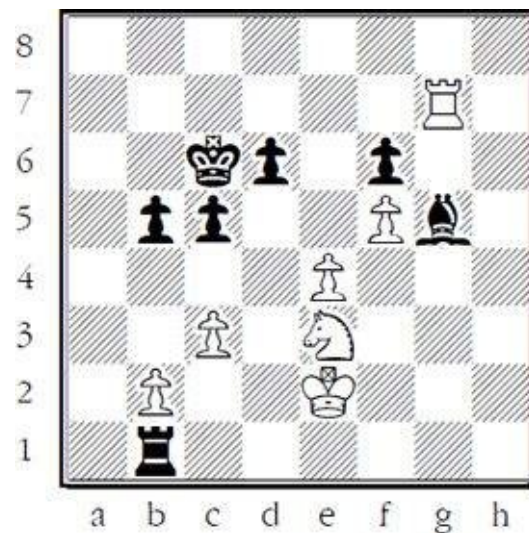
Black looks to take a seventh rank of his own.

3.Ne3



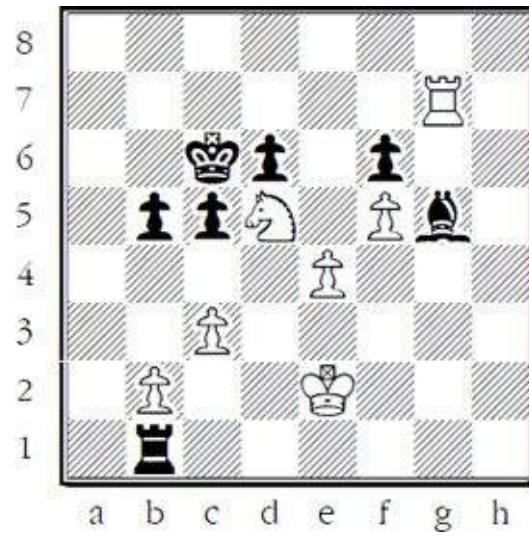
With the b-pawn no longer attacked, the knight eyes d5.

3...Rb1



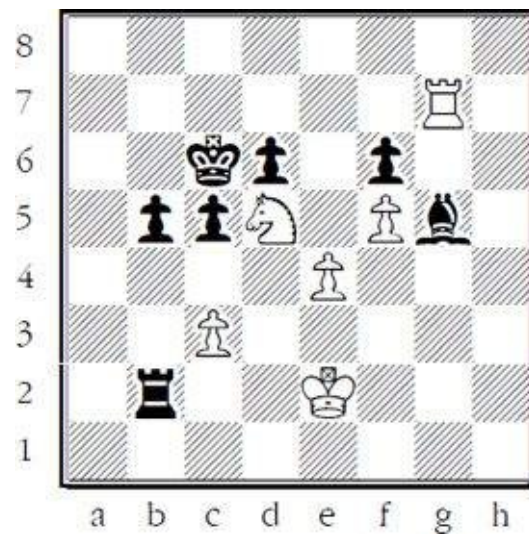
Trading bishop for knight wins the b-pawn but abandons the f-pawn.

4.Nd5!



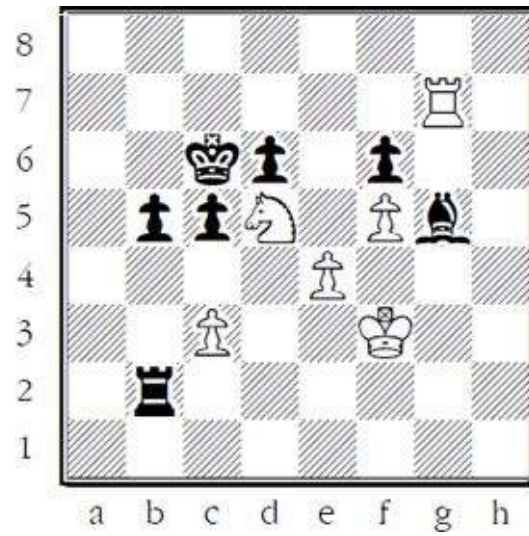
White lets the b-pawn go with check, now that he has a mate threat at c7.

4...Rxb2+



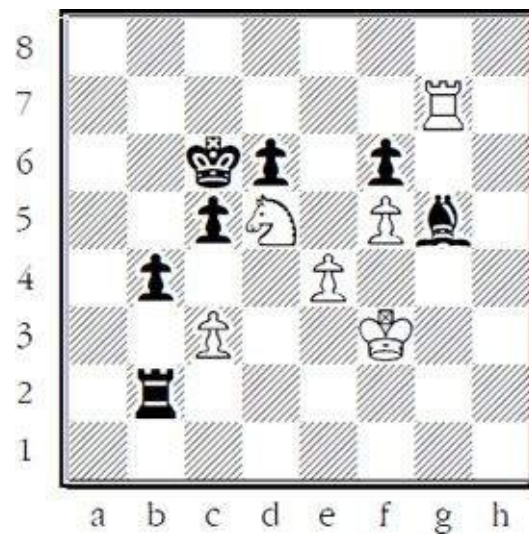
So the b-pawn does indeed fall, and with check. Will wonders never cease?

5.Kf3



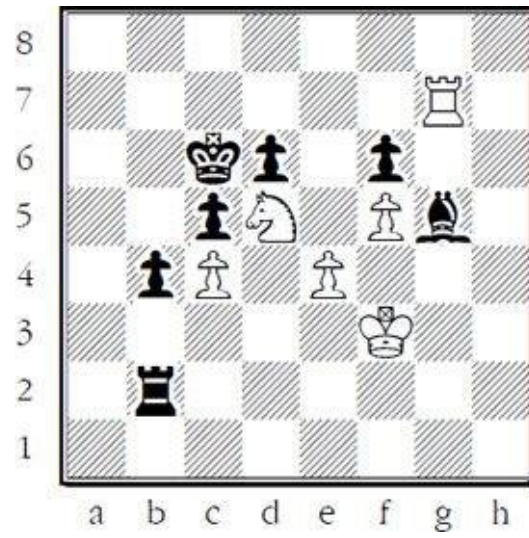
How is Black to cope with the mate threat at c7?

5...b4



This clears b5 for escape.

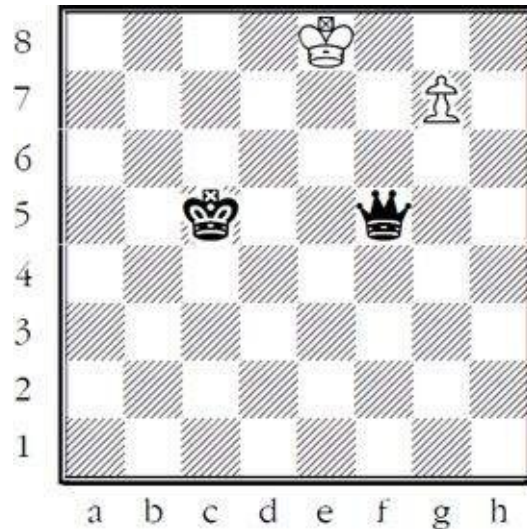
6.c4!



And this takes it away. Mate can be delayed, but not stopped. **(1-0)**

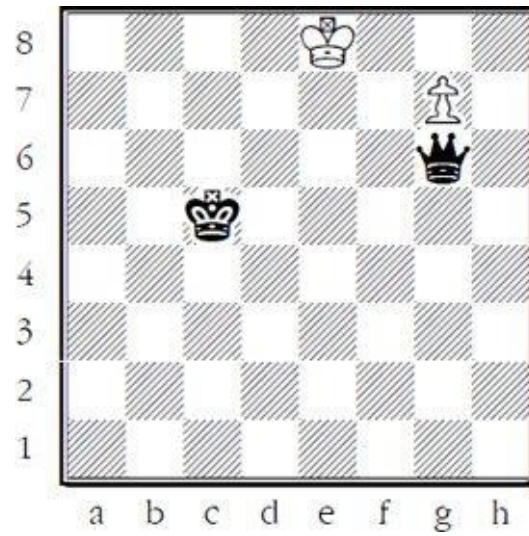
(5) Staunton vs. Williams, 1851

Black is up a queen for a pawn



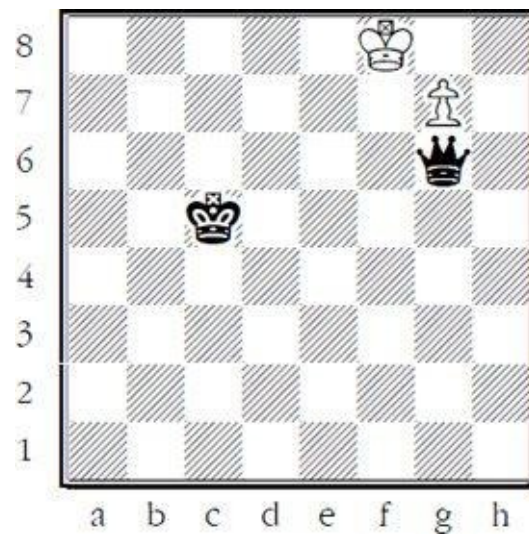
In this textbook position, White has a knight-pawn about to promote. But Black's queen is admirably centralized for ease of use, and Black has the move. With precise play, the win is very easy. A bishop-pawn or a rook-pawn might cause trouble. Sometimes there's the potential for a saving stalemate. But a knight-pawn offers no such solace. Here Black follows a simple formula and moves in for the kill.

1...Qg6+



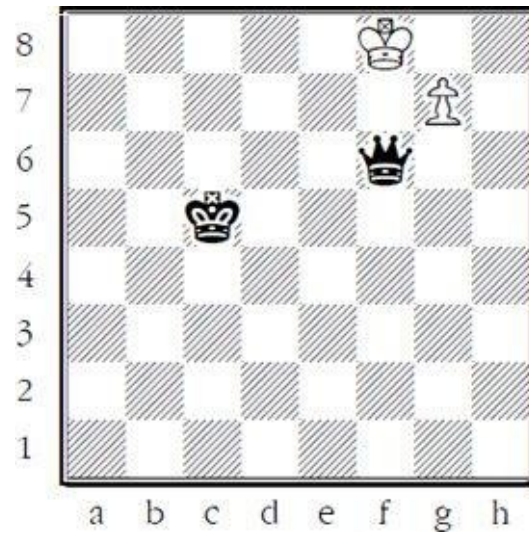
Black begins by getting “on top of the pawn” with check.

2.Kf8



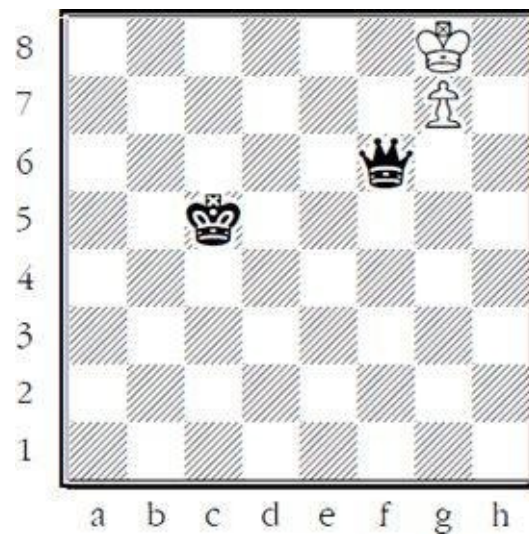
The pawn had to be guarded.

2...Qf6+



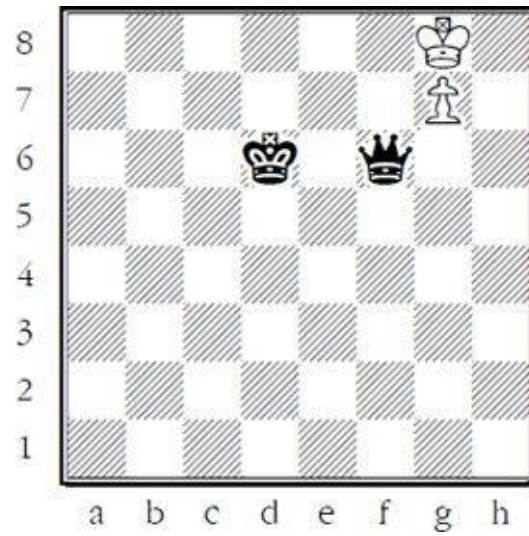
To keep the pawn, White must obstruct it by moving the king to g8.

3.Kg8



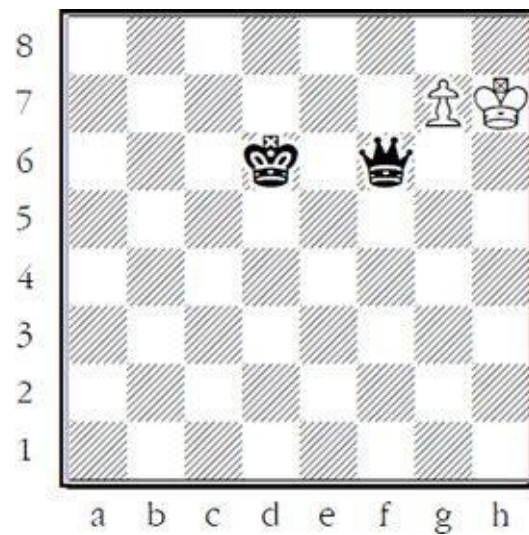
Now Black has one free tempo to move his king closer.

3...Kd6



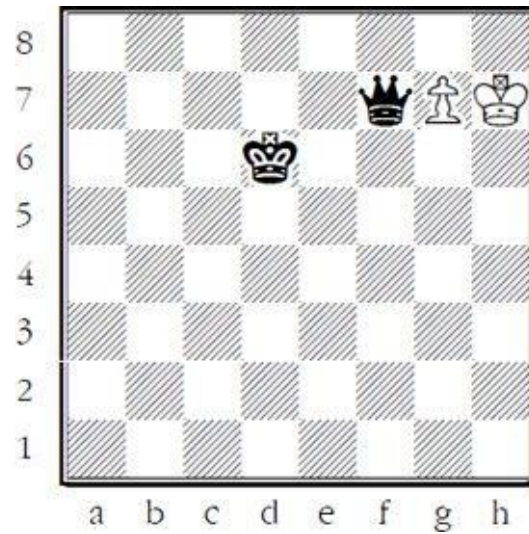
The black king indeed gets a little closer.

4.Kh7



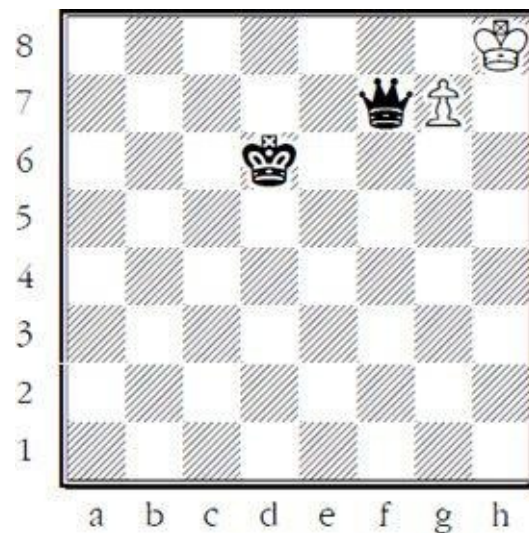
Again, White threatens to promote.

4...Qf7!



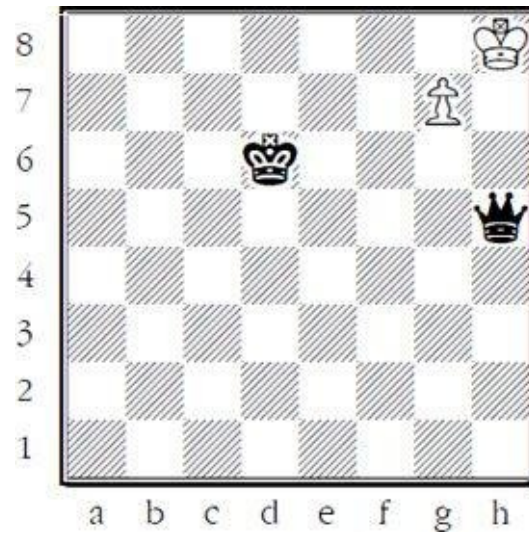
This pinning motif prevents the pawn's advance.

5.Kh8



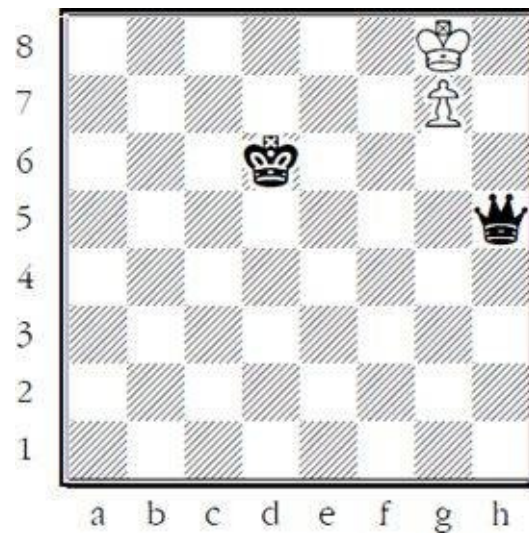
The counter 5.Kh6 menaces nothing. Black could even blockade with the queen at g8.

5...Qh5+



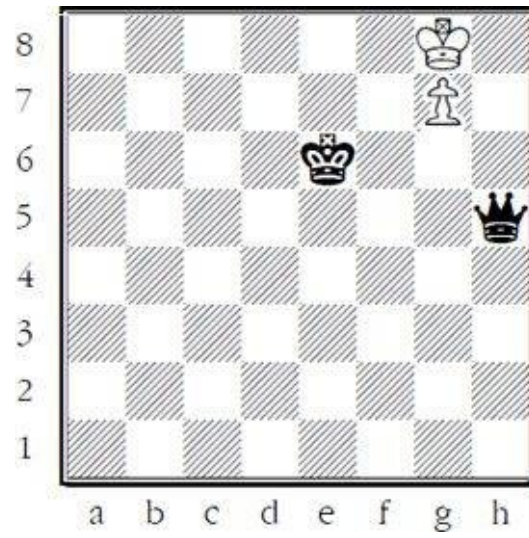
This check forces the white king to block the pawn once again, giving Black another tempo.

6.Kg8



White still has one hope.

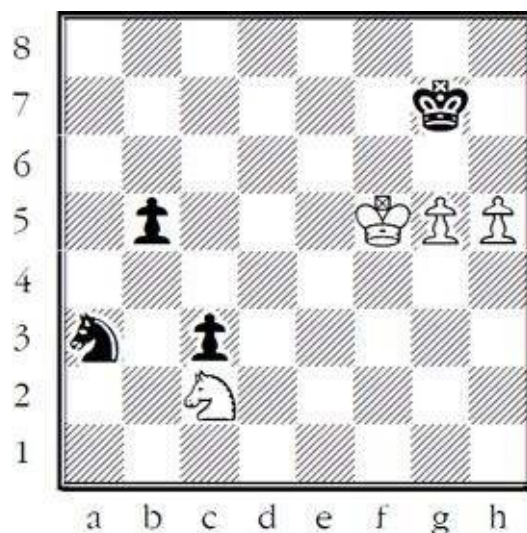
6...Ke6!



This crushes it. It's mate next. Black had hoped for 6...Ke7 stalemate. **(0-1)**

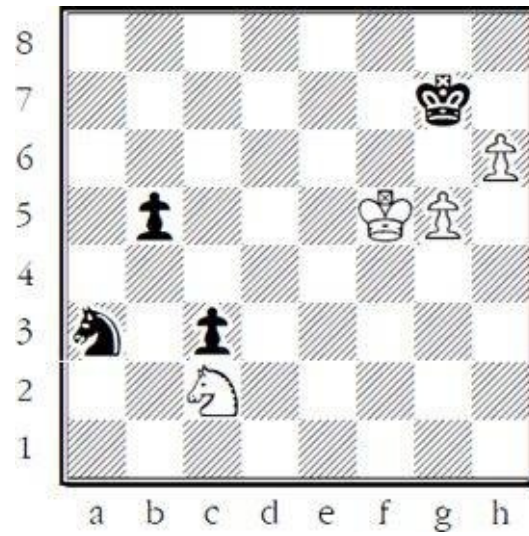
(6) Morphy vs. Thompson, 1859

White is even



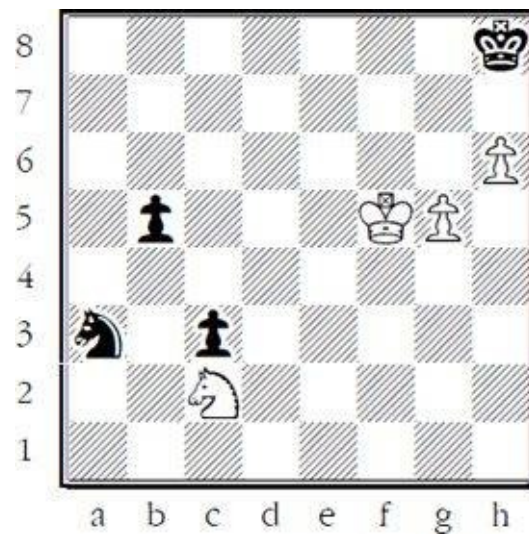
In this tricky knight ending, the position is materially even, though with the move White can win a knight. The real issue concerns connected pawns. White's are dangerous, but so are Black's, soon advancing against a lone knight. It all comes down to timing. To that end, before White captures the knight, he can use the tempo productively. It gives him control over time's winged chariot.

1.h6+



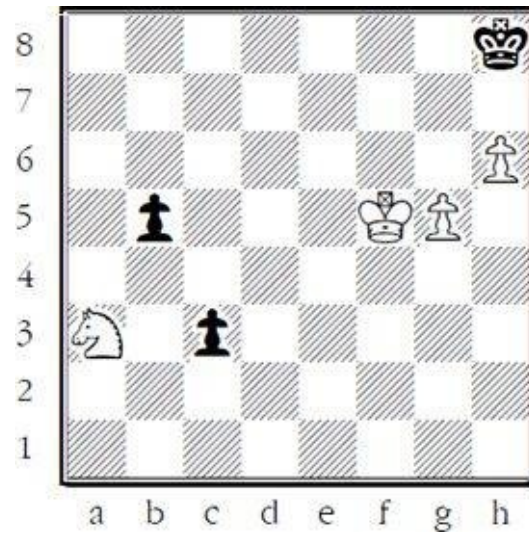
Before taking the knight, White moves up the h-pawn with check.

1...Kh8



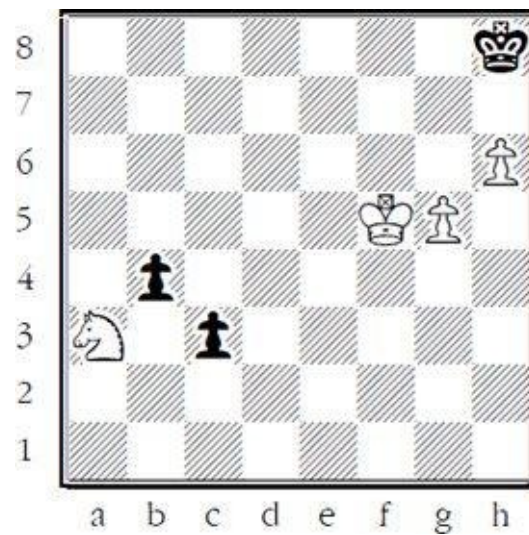
No king move could have saved the day for Black, and king moves are all he had.

2.Nxa3



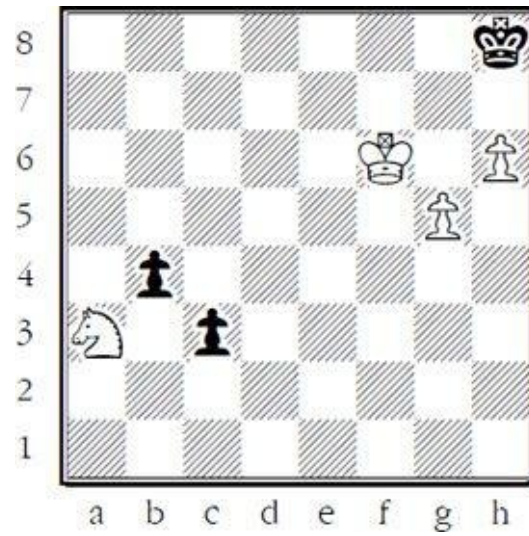
It was time to take the gift horse.

2...b4



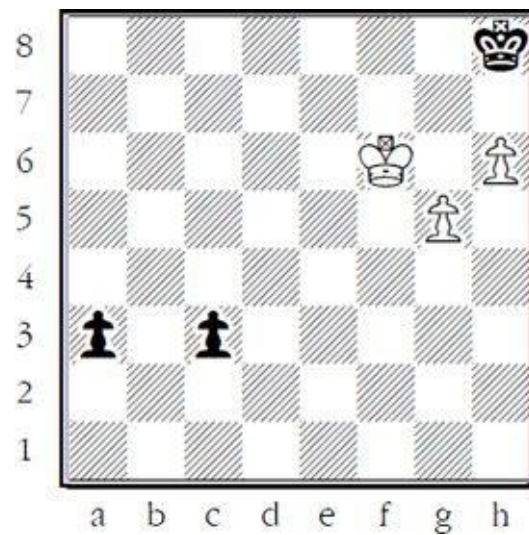
Where is the knight going to go?

3.Kf6!



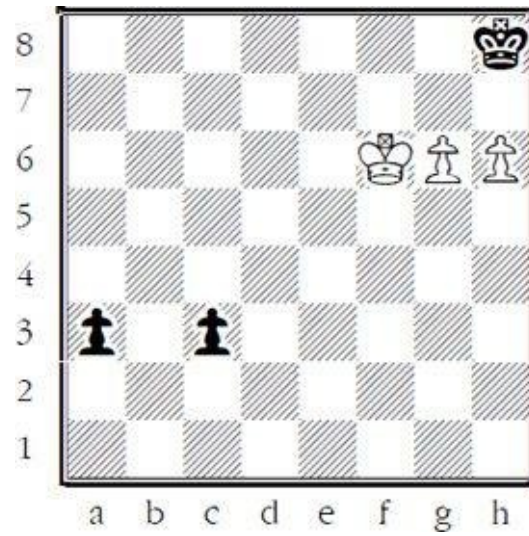
White sacs the knight to beat Black to the punch. He wants to queen first.

3...bxa3



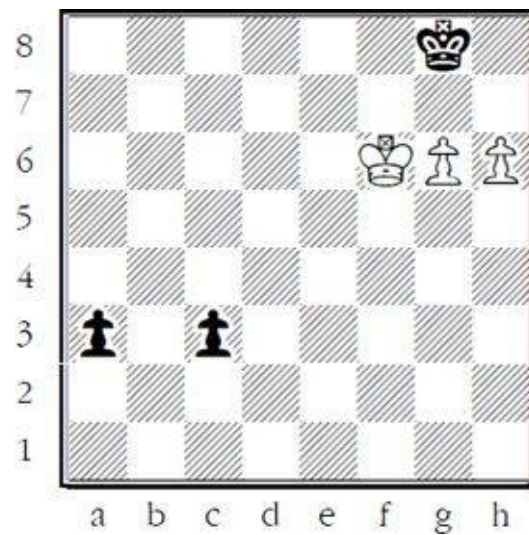
The race is on, split pawns against connected ones.

4.g6



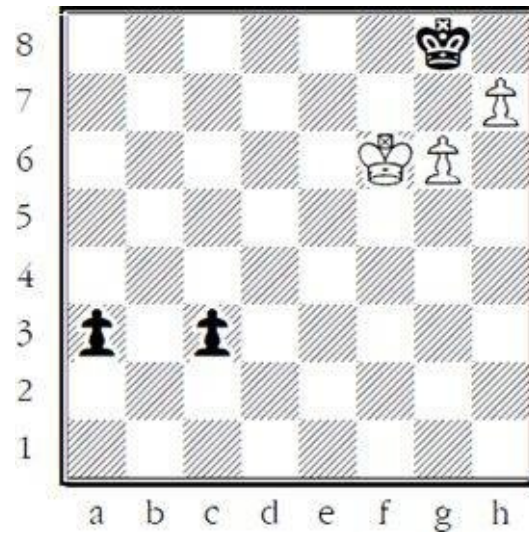
If 4...a2, for instance, White has 5.Kf7 a1/Q 6.g7+ Kh7 7.g8/Q+ winning.

4...Kg8



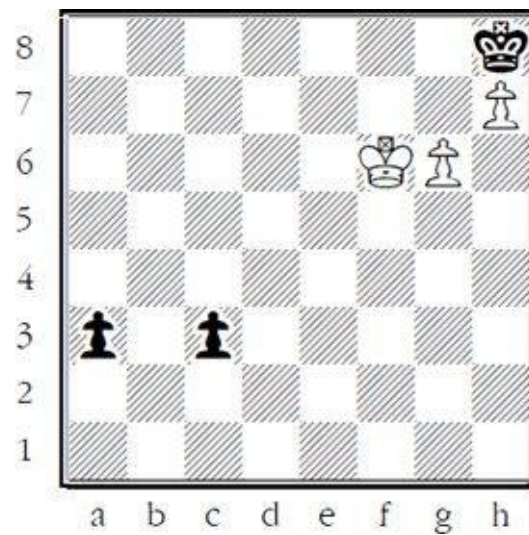
Black tries to prevent the entry of White's king.

5.h7+



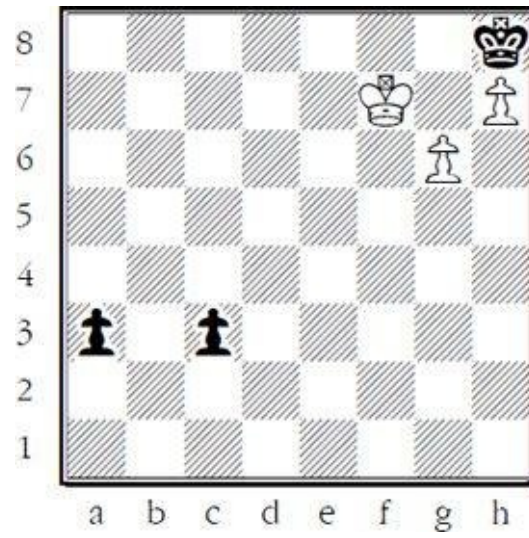
This check forces Black's reply.

5...Kh8



Black's other king move allowed mate in one.

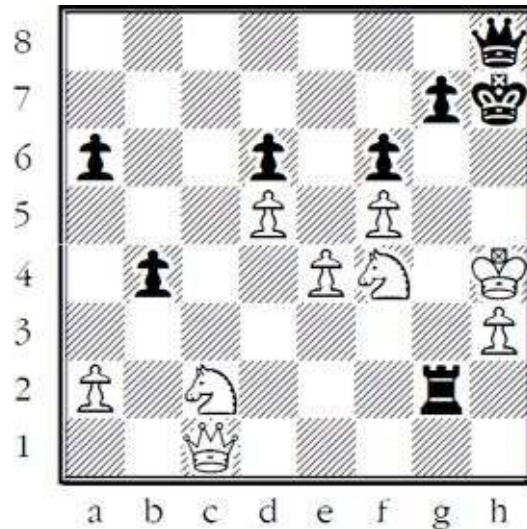
6.Kf7



Whichever pawn Black moves, White mates him in three moves. **(1-0)**

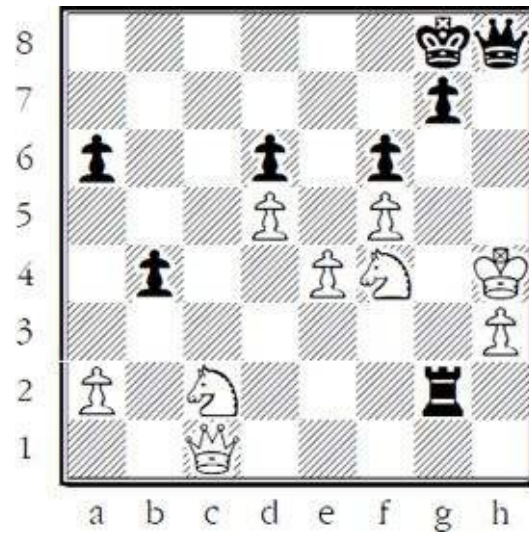
(7) Zukertort vs. Anderssen, 1866

Black is down two knights for a rook



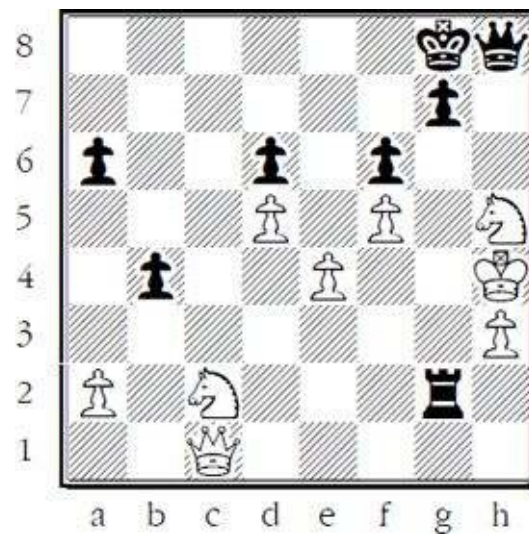
Although White is slightly ahead in material, White's king is cutoff and dangerously in line with Black's queen. True, Black's rook is attacked, and his queen is temporarily buried in the corner. But with Black on the move, and his king having a place to hide, White's king might start to feel the heat. White hopes he can prevent Black's two heavy pieces from linking up, while his own knights become useful on the kingside. Black doesn't let that take place.

1...Kg8+



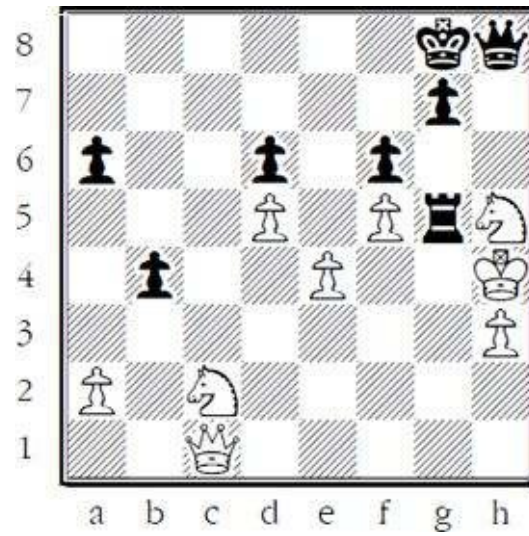
Before saving the rook, Black introduces his queen by discovery.

2.Nh5



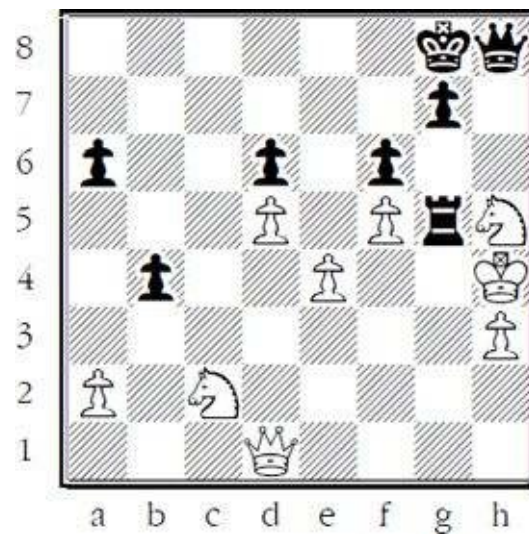
This turns out to be White's only move.

2...Rg5



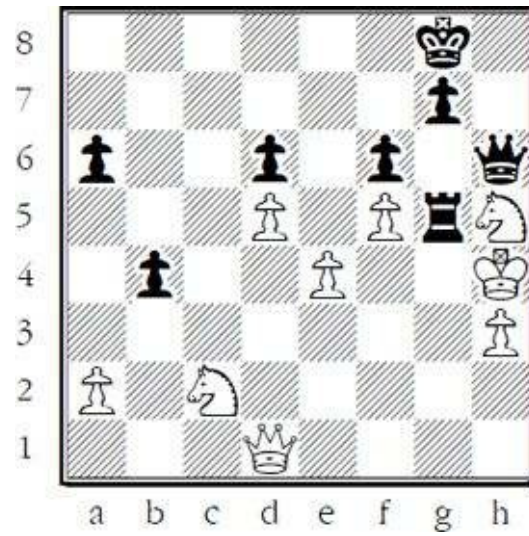
White's pinned knight is in trouble.

3.Qd1



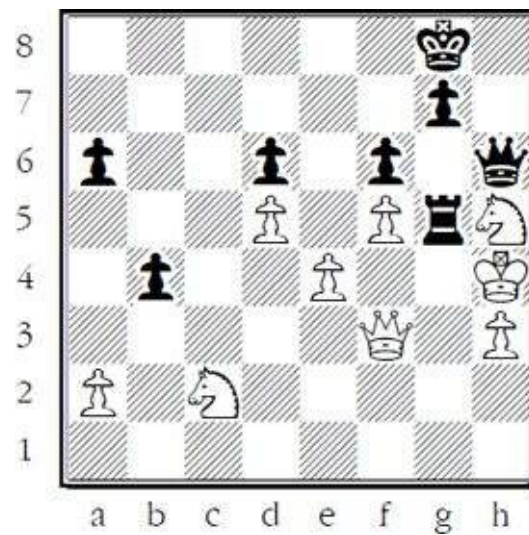
White had to uphold his knight and thereby stop mate.

3...Qh6



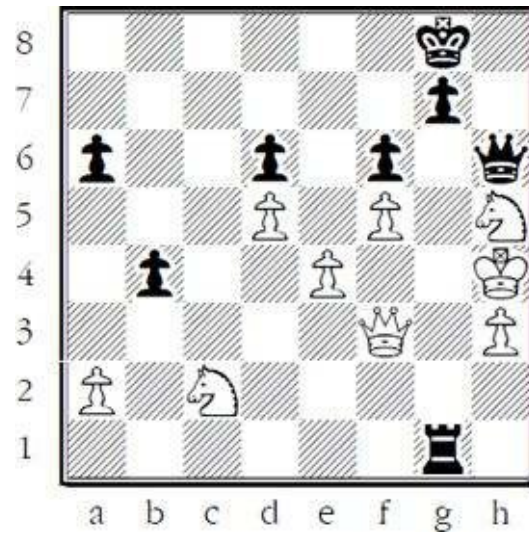
Even in the endgame one must develop his pieces.

4.Qf3



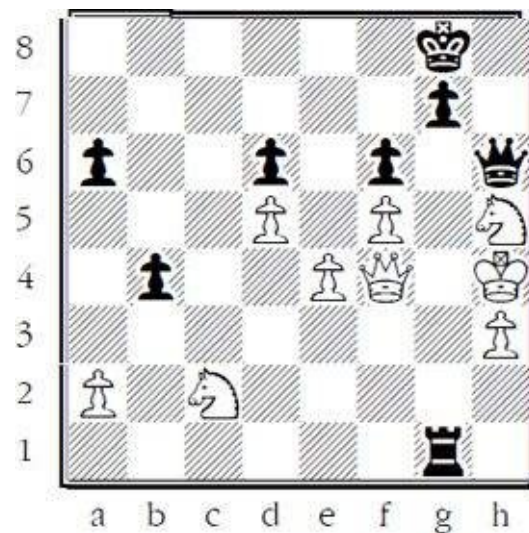
White activates his queen as well.

4...Rg1



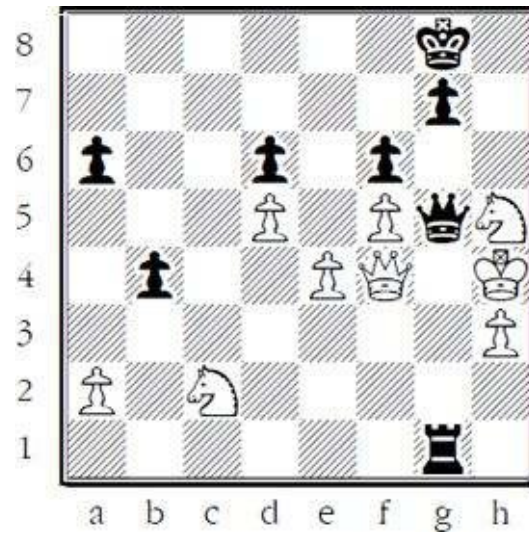
Now g5 is cleared for different use: to threaten mate by the queen.

5.Qf4



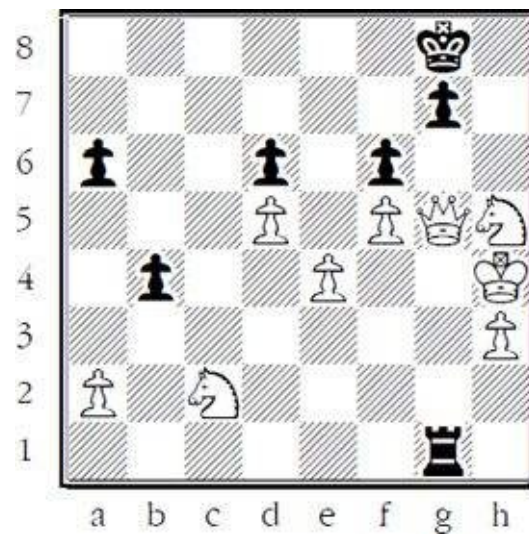
White plays to trade queens. When under attack, trade off the attacking pieces.

5...Qg5+!



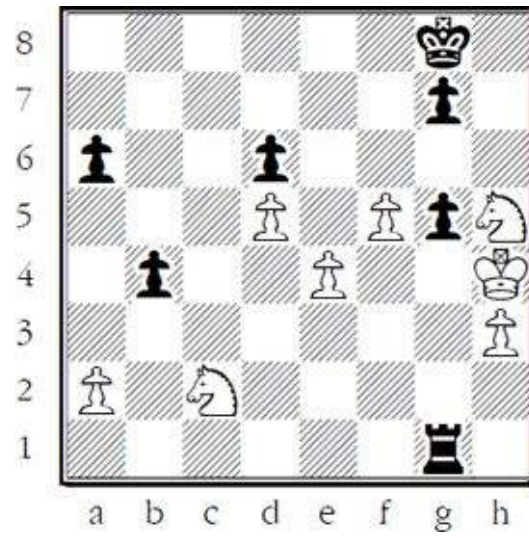
Black says “I don’t mind a trade – especially here.”

6.Qxg5



This was White’s only move.

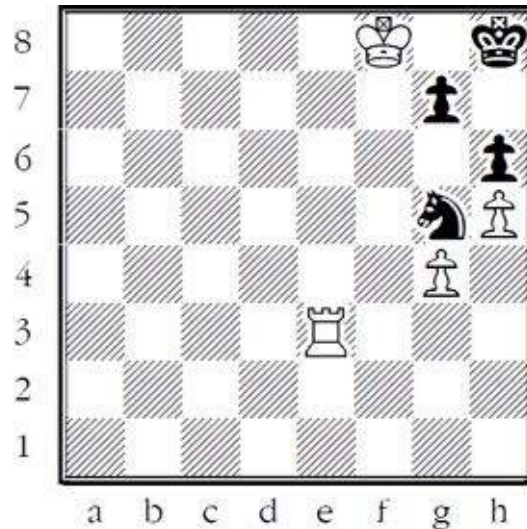
6...fxg5 mate



This was not Black's only move, but it does render mate. **(0-1)**

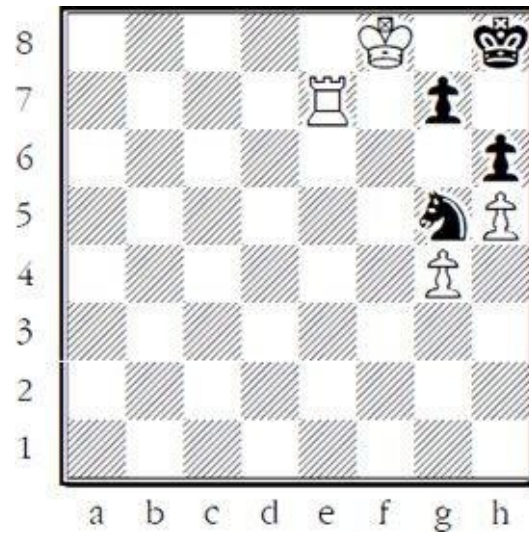
(8) Steinitz vs. Anderssen, 1866

White is up the Exchange



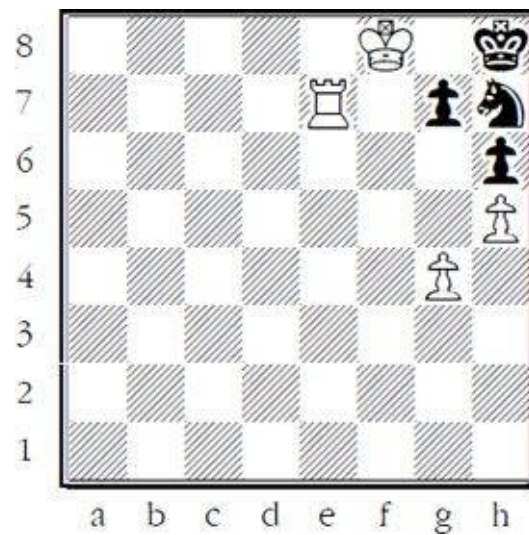
With even pawns, all on one side, but a rook versus a knight, White has a distinct advantage. Moreover, the placement of White's king suggests a chance to win material. The g-pawn in particular seems ripe for plucking. Generally, when ahead by the Exchange, one looks to steal material, either directly or by simplifying to a winning pawn ending. Unless, of course, something called "mate" intervenes first.

1.Re7



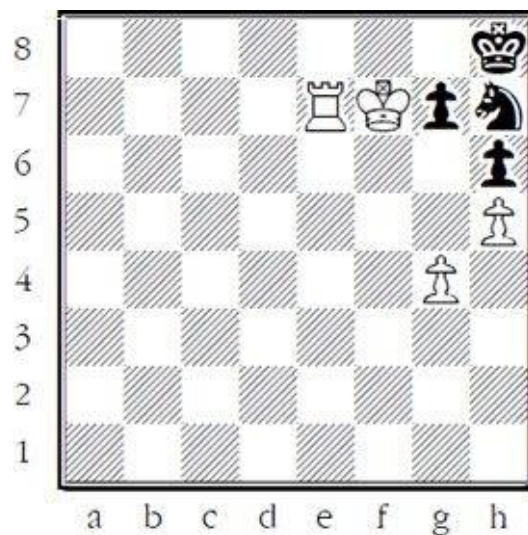
The rook seizes the seventh rank and the g-pawn is seriously menaced.

1...Nh7+



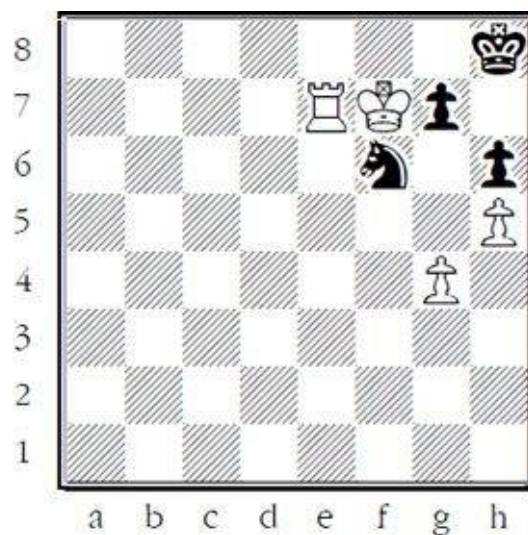
For the meantime, this check avoids loss of a pawn.

2.Kf7



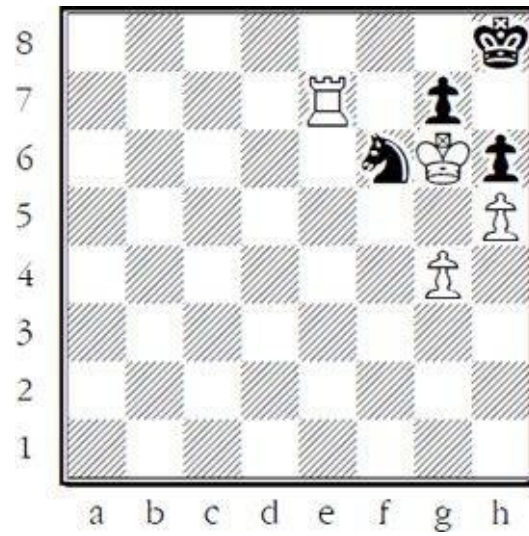
White prepares to invade on the weak g6-square.

2...Nf6



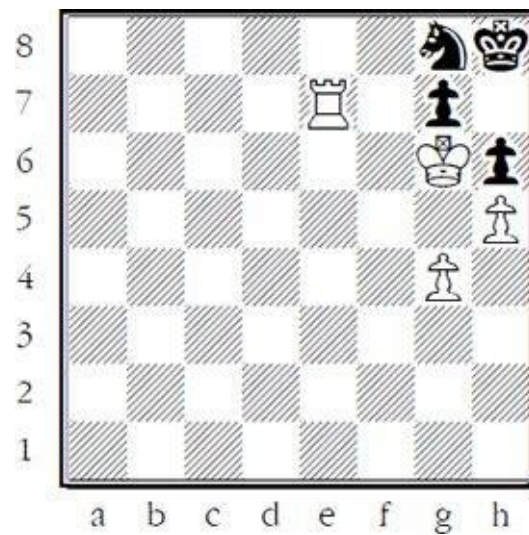
On 2...Ng5+ there follows 3.Kg6, threatening the g-pawn and mate.

3.Kg6



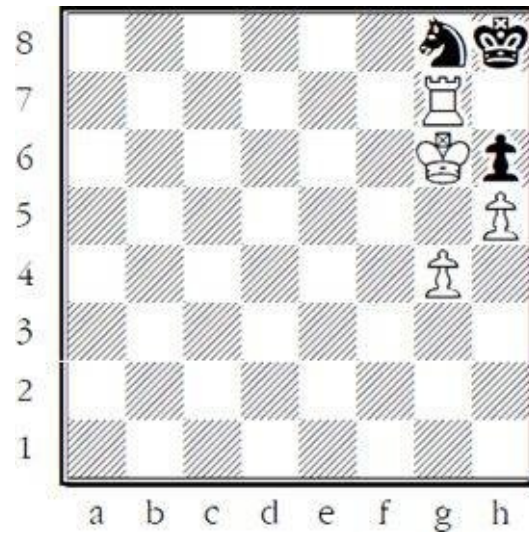
White moves in anyway. Black is reduced to pure defense.

3...Ng8



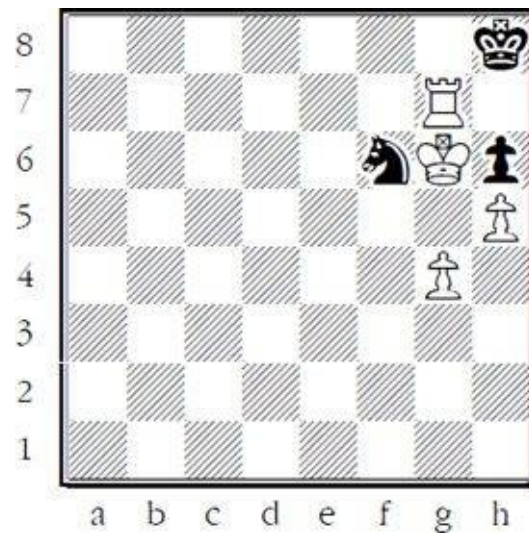
Now 4.Re8? gives stalemate.

4.Rxg7



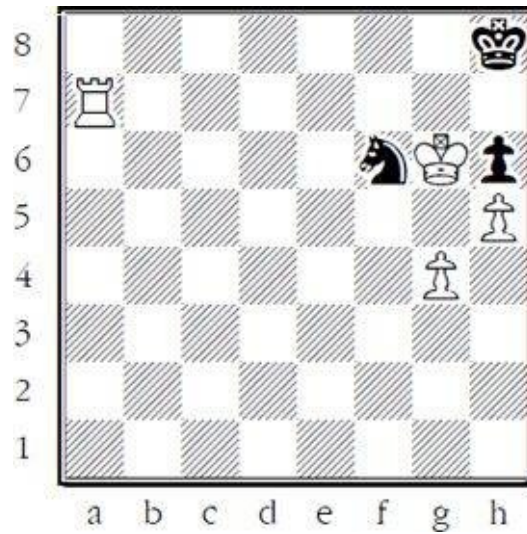
The knight has been outmaneuvered. The g-pawn falls, with bigger game to follow.

4...Nf6



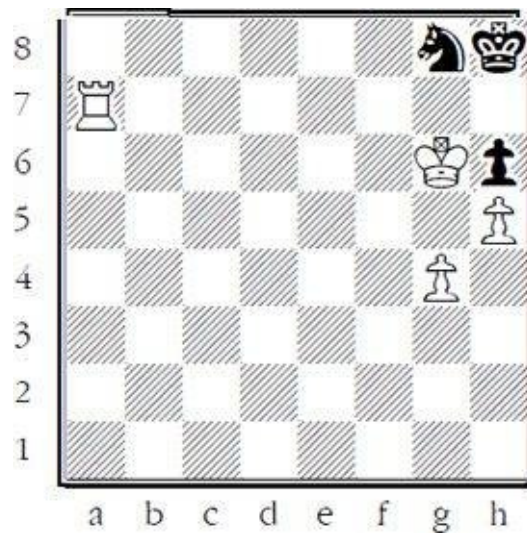
More stalemate tricks. The knight can't be taken.

5.Ra7



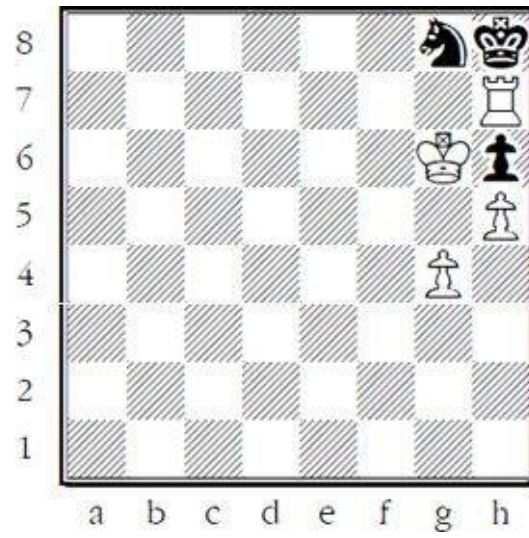
On 5.Kxh6 Black had 5...Nxg4+ 6.Rxg4 stalemate. Such tricks are Black's best hope.

5...Ng8



Black had to shield his king. On 5...Ne8 White forces mate by 6.Ra8.

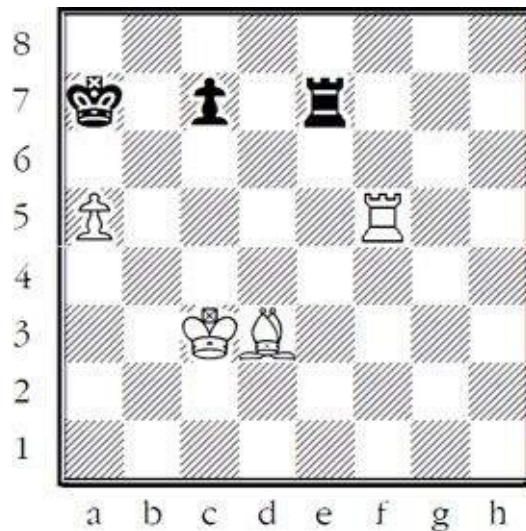
6.Rh7 mate



But this is mate, plain and simple, simple and plain. **(1-0)**

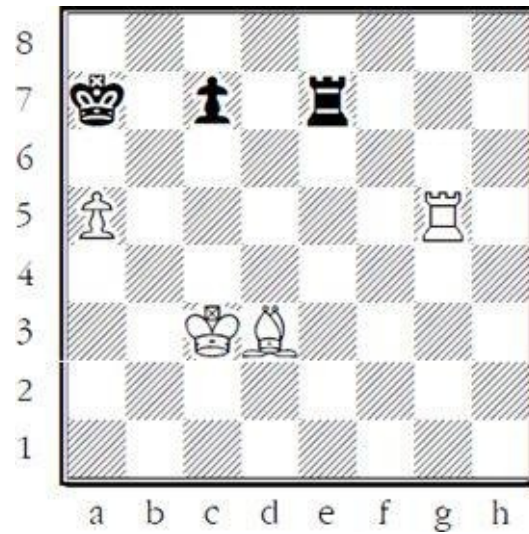
(9) Steinitz vs. Zukertort, 1872

White is up a bishop



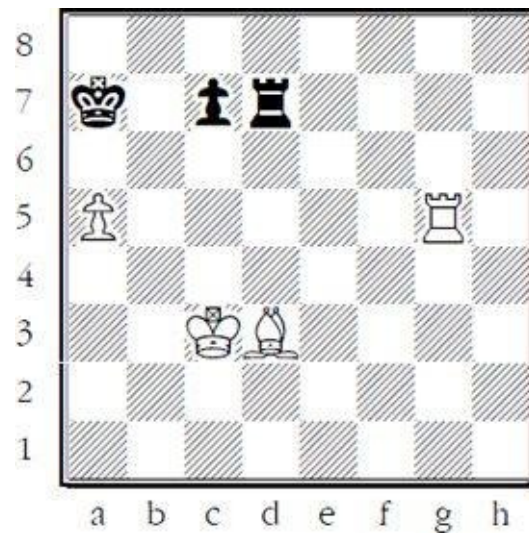
White is ahead in material and has a dominant position. True, his pawn is a rook-pawn, but his bishop can control the queening square, so there's no drawing salvation in that. A few kinks have to be worked out, and Steinitz, the recognized world champion at the time, is truly up to doing it. It's a matter of putting the pieces on strong squares and moving in for the thrill. Steinitz had a propensity for such action.

1.Rg5



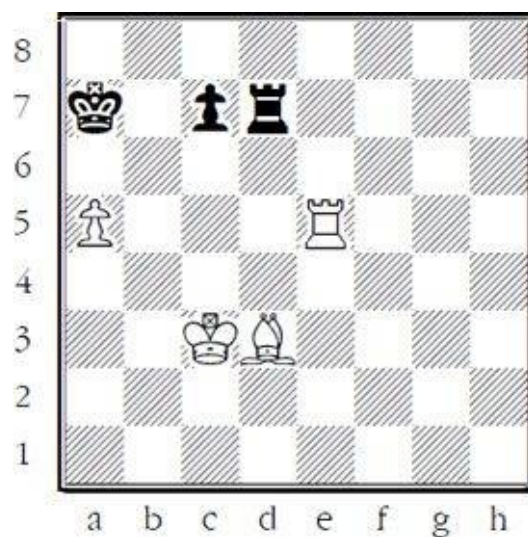
A principle in many endgames is not to hurry. White waits for everything to be right.

1...Rd7



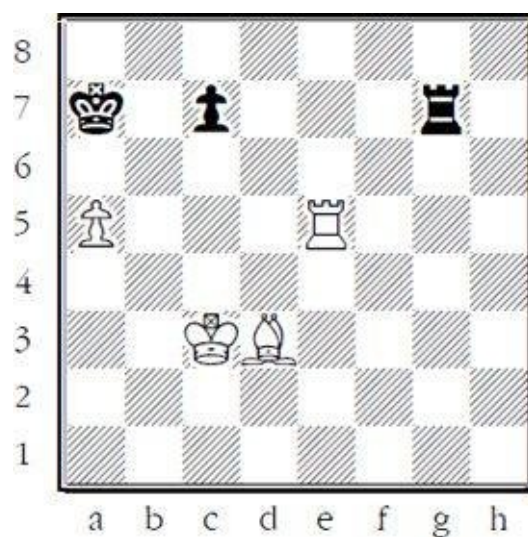
Black in turn can merely bide his time, waiting for White to go wrong.

2.Re5!



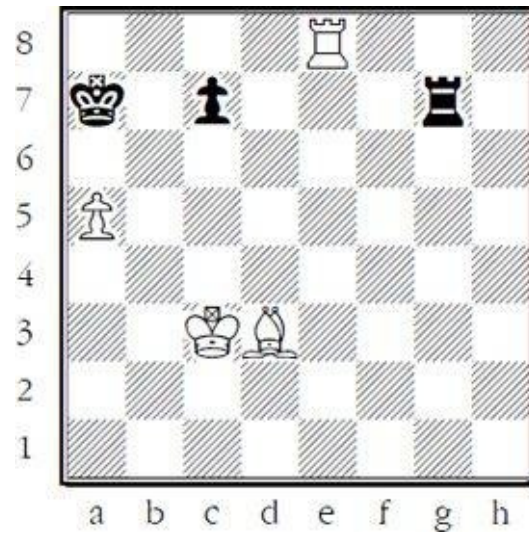
This centralization splits the board and supports the bishop going to e4.

2...Rg7



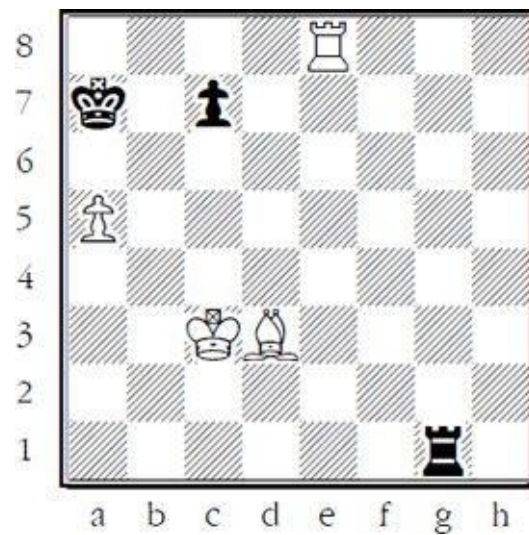
Black puts the rook on a dark square and keeps the second rank guarded.

3.Re8!



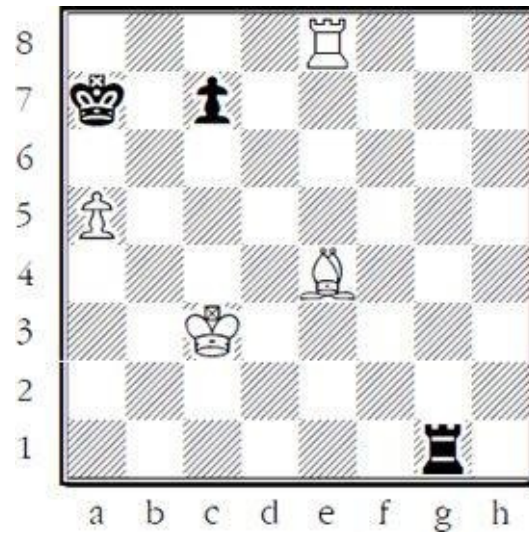
This is a powerful invasion which soon wins.

3...Rg1



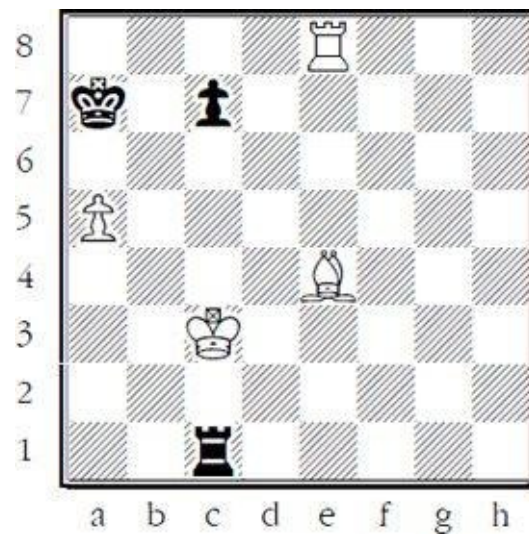
Black looks for counterplay, but he might have tried 3...Rg5.

4.Be4!



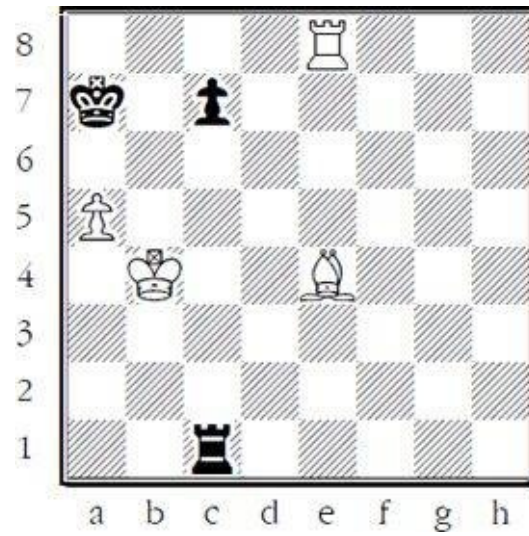
The threat is mate at a8.

4...Rc1+



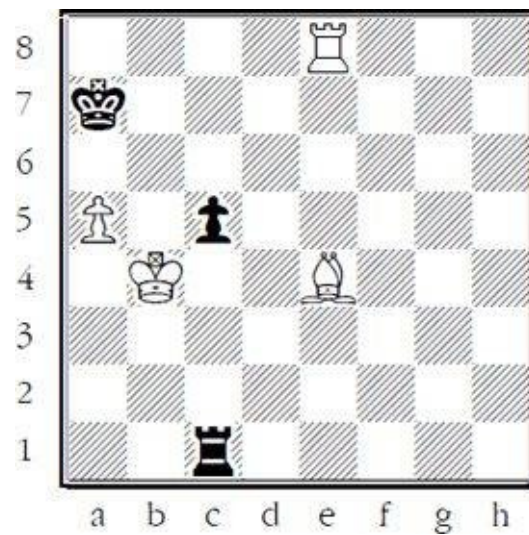
Black falls back on some ineffectual harassment tactics. The checks will soon stop.

5.Kb4



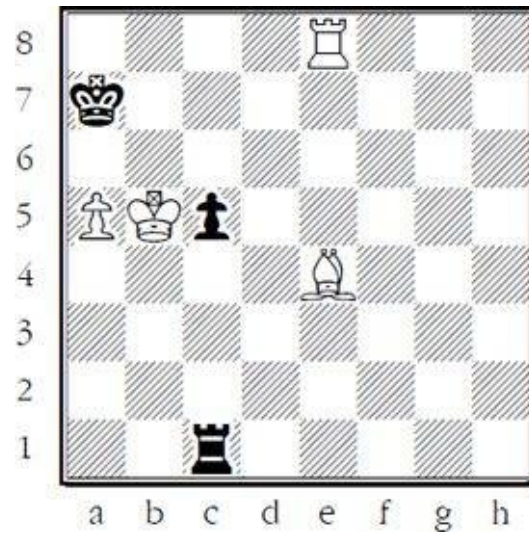
The rook was won immediately by 5. Kb2.

5...c5+



The checks just keep coming, but it's nowhere they're going.

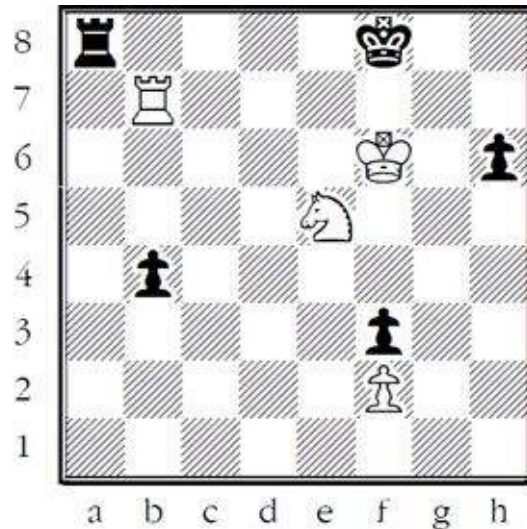
6.Kb5



The best Black can do is delay mate for a bit. **(1-0)**

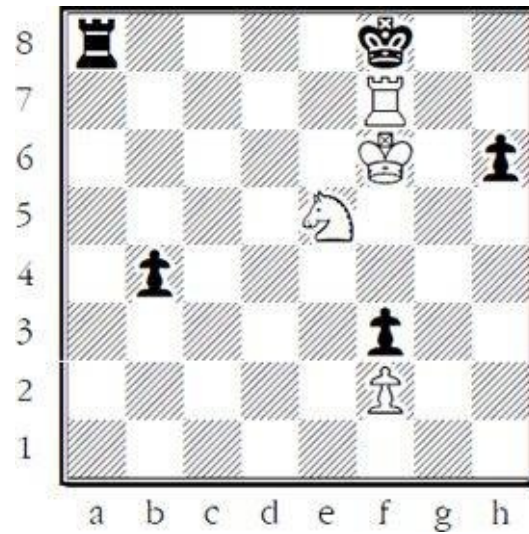
(10) Lasker vs. Schiffers, 1896

White is up a knight for two pawns



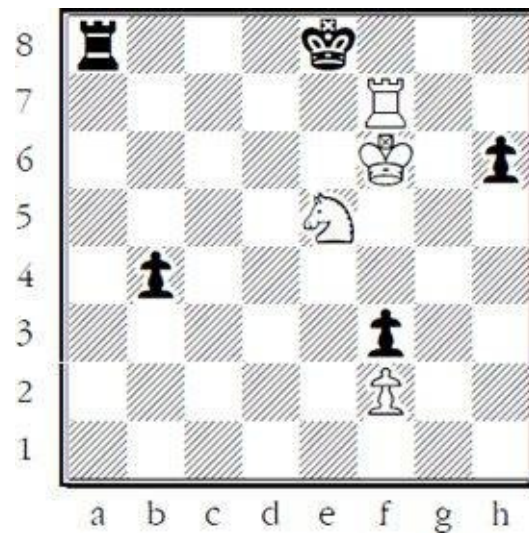
White has a definite material advantage, while Black's passed pawns are not serious threats. Indeed, White could win them at will. But White has a mating force in place: a rook on the seventh, a centralized knight, and a participating king. White could gobble up the stray black pawns. He might win the black rook or even mate. With such nice options, it's not hard to imagine a quick end. To be sure, it didn't take Lasker very long.

1.Rf7+



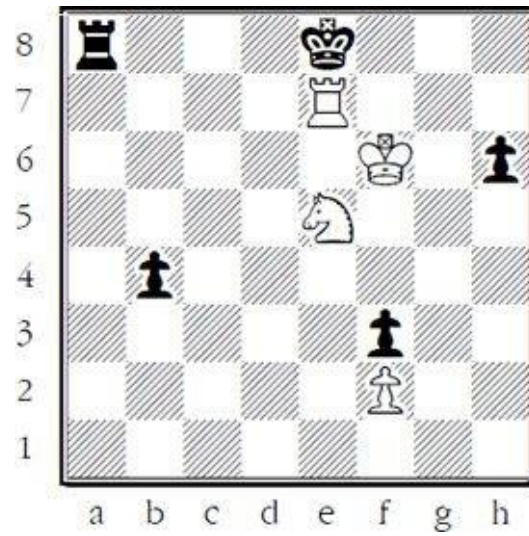
White moves in for the final kill. Wherever Black goes, that's not where he wants to go.

1...Ke8



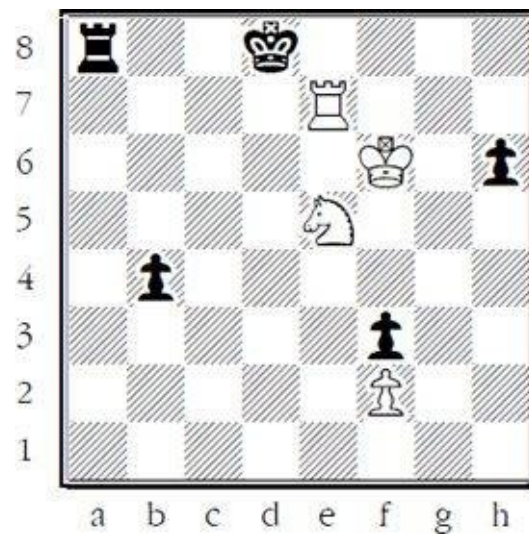
If 1...Kg8, then 2.Rg7+ Kf8 (best) 3.Nd7+ Ke8 4.Nb6, threatening the rook and mate at g8.

2.Re7+



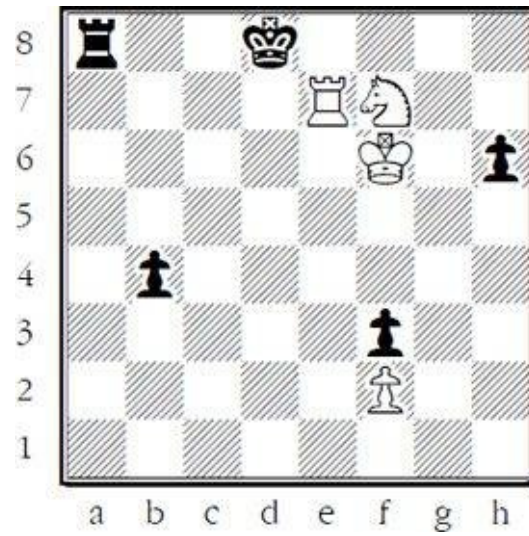
White forces Black's king to commit, one way or the other.

2...Kd8



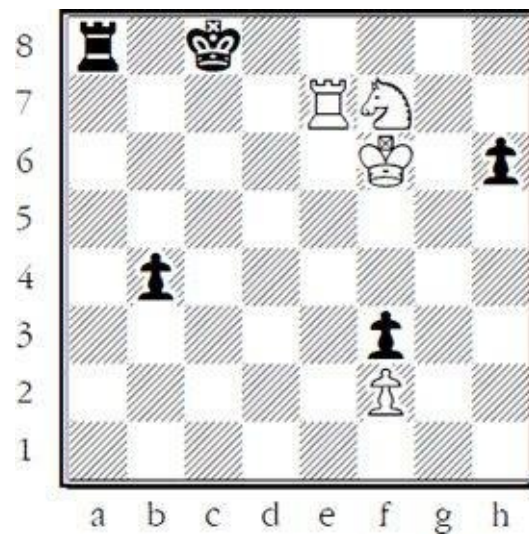
On 2...Kf8 White has 3.Ng6+ Kg8 4.Rg7 mate.

3.Nf7+



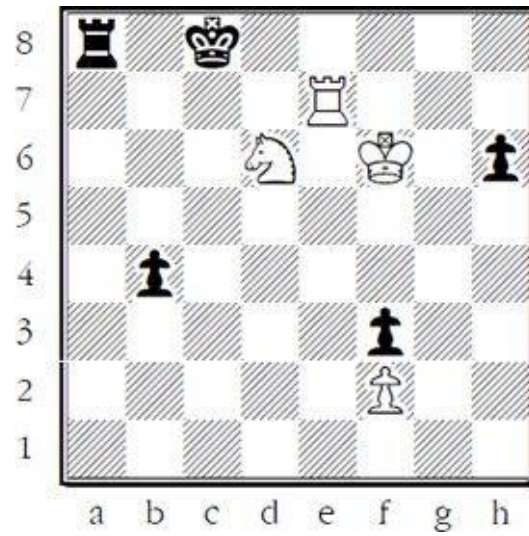
The knight shifts slightly to the kingside to come back to the middle.

3...Kc8



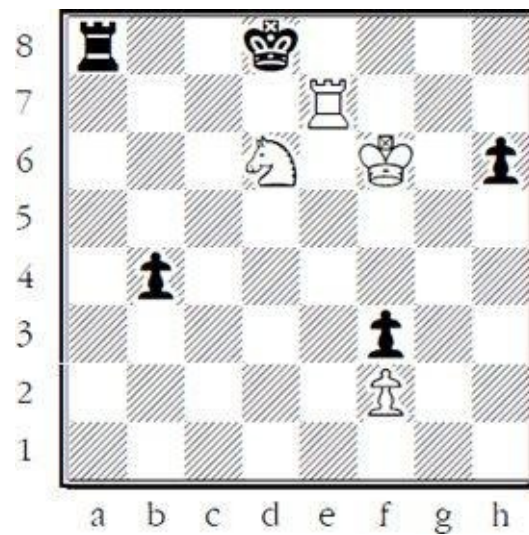
This was Black's only move.

4.Nd6+



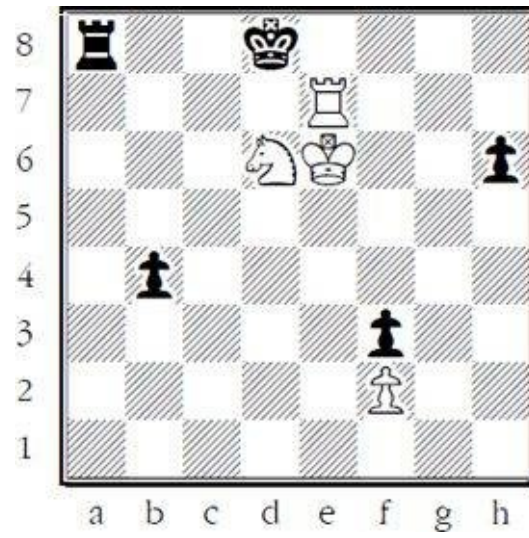
This, too, leaves Black practically no choice.

4...Kd8



On 4...Kb8 there would have followed 5.Rb7 mate.

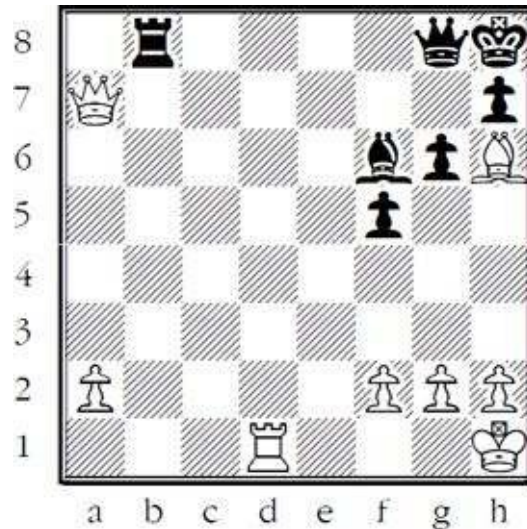
5.Ke6!



This wraps it up: Black can delay the mate for one move. **(1-0)**

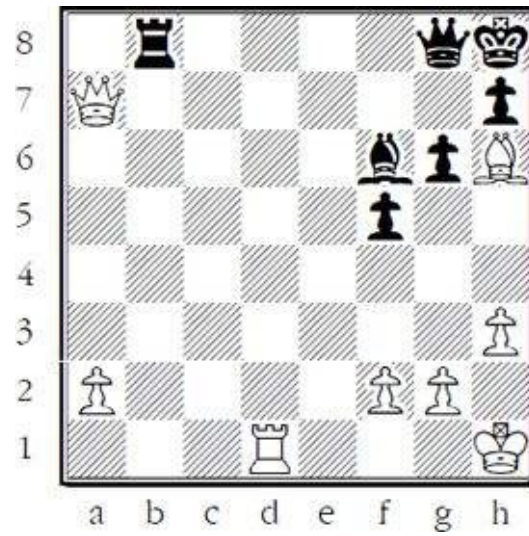
(11) Spielmann vs. Nimzowitsch, 1905

White is up a pawn



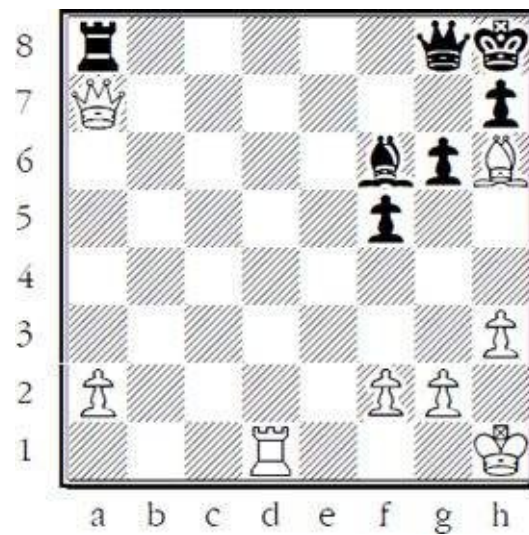
White has an extra pawn, an outside passed pawn at that. If all the pieces were suddenly removed from the board, the a-pawn should win. Either it would queen directly or lure away the black king, giving White's king a free hand on the kingside. White, to be sure, has to be careful. His own back rank could become vulnerable, with an enemy queen and rook still present. But Black has some problems of his own, and White finds how to exploit them.

1.h3



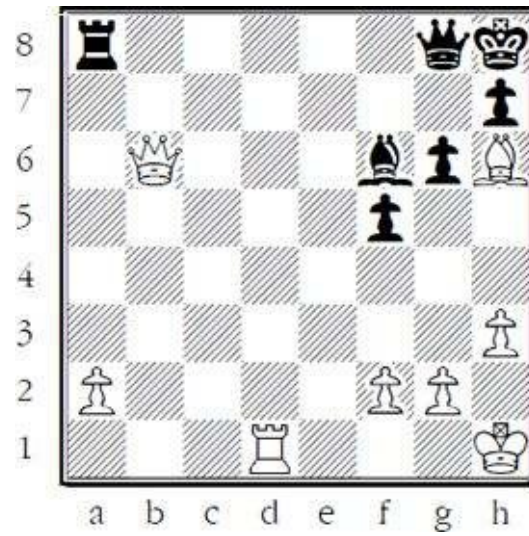
First White takes care of business, creating space (*luft*) for his king.

1...Ra8



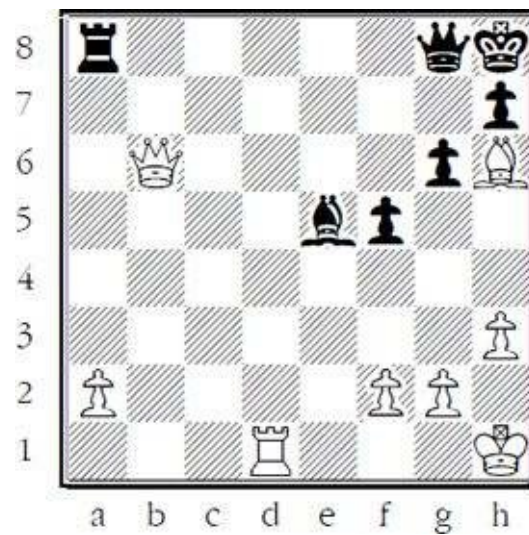
White's queen and a-pawn are under fire.

2.Qb6



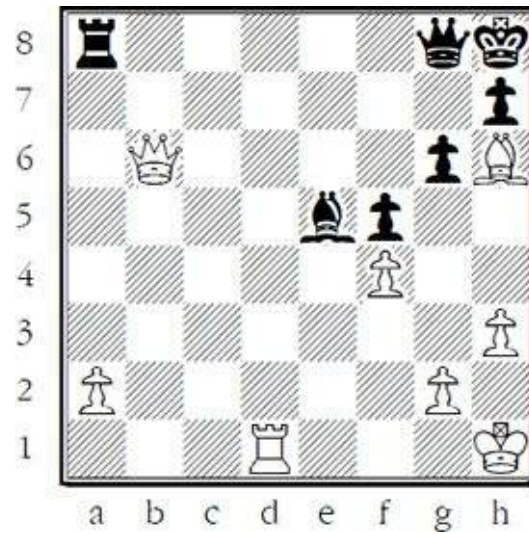
White moves the queen to safety with a gain of time, attacking the bishop.

2...Be5



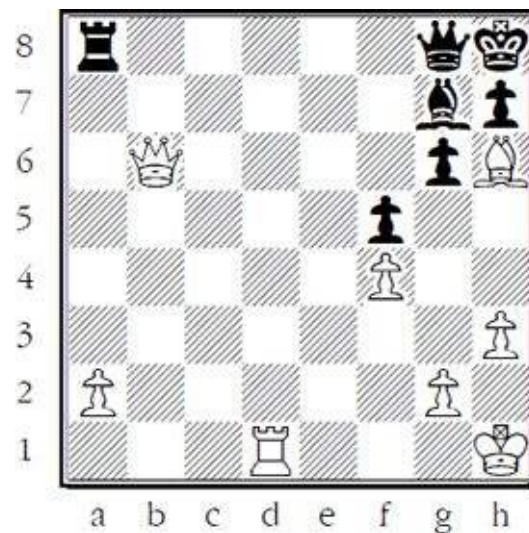
Black saves the bishop and takes away White's h2-escape.

3.f4!



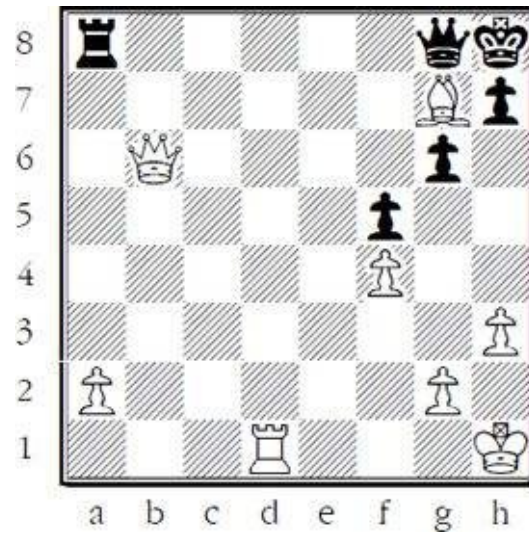
White harasses the bishop and obstructs its line, “kicking it in the face.”

3...Bg7



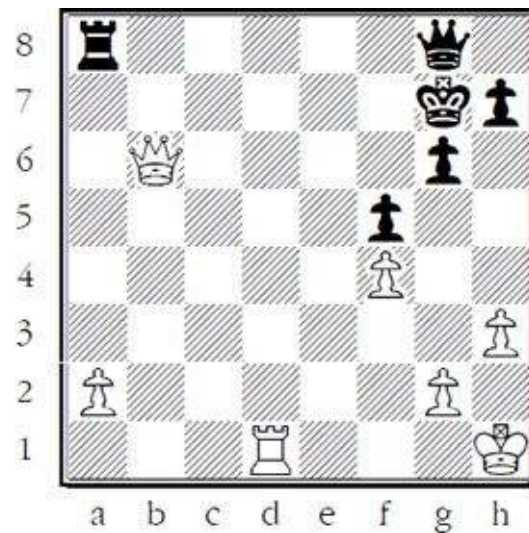
Black offers a trade of bishops, hoping to reduce the pressure.

4.Bxg7+



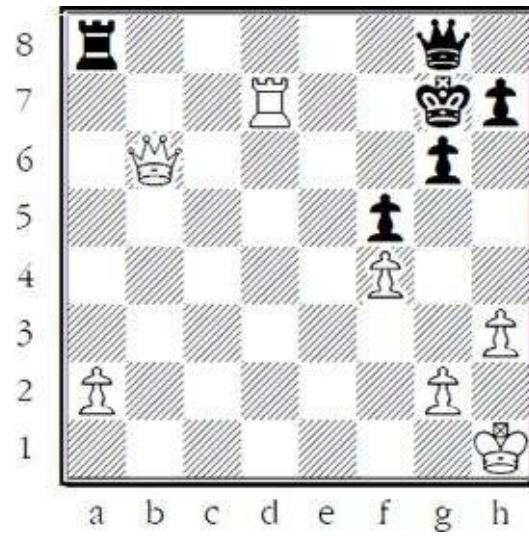
When ahead by a pawn, generally trade pieces, unless there's some clear reason not to.

4...Kxg7



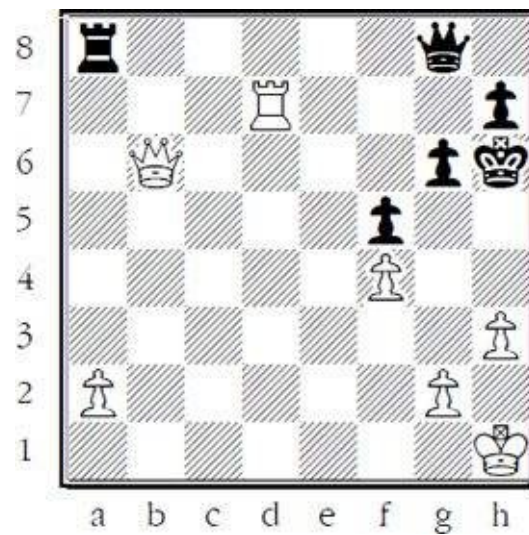
On 4...Qxg7, White has 5.Rd8+. After the pieces come off, the a-pawn runs, a2-a4.

5.Rd7+



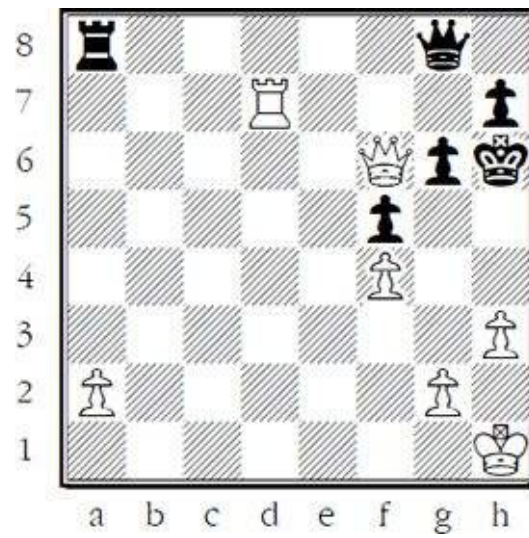
This seventh rank invasion seals Black's fate.

5...Kh6



Both 5...Kh8 and 5...Kf8 fall to, among others, 6.Qf6+.

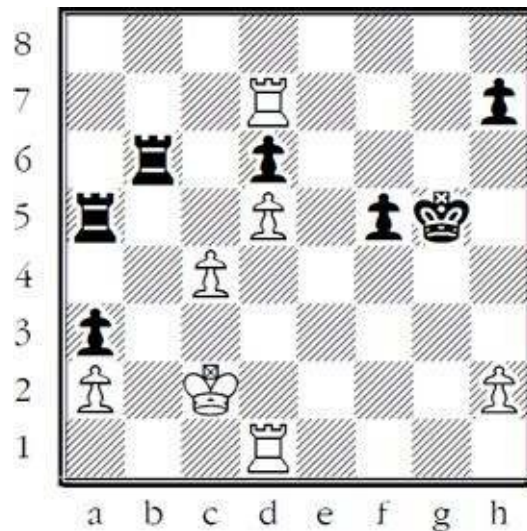
6.Qf6!



It's mate at g5 or h4, since 6...Qd8 7.Qg7+ is not much better. **(1-0)**

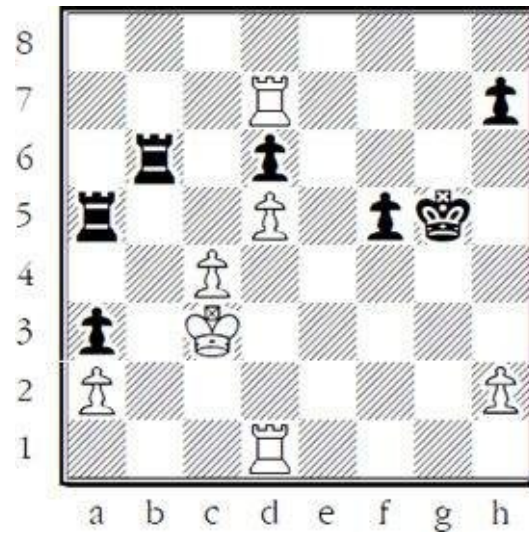
(12) Rubinstein vs. Chigorin, 1906

White is even



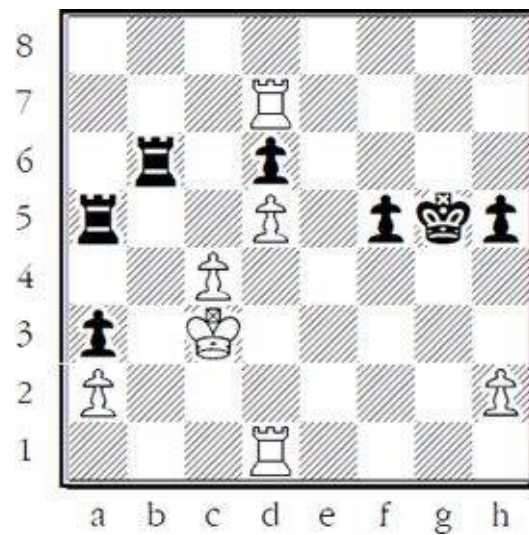
When both sides have two rooks working in tandem, sudden catastrophic things can happen. Right now, neither side has its rooks working in harmony. But if that situation changes, dangerous attacks may materialize just like that. To start with, Black is menacing an incursion to the seventh rank. But White's rooks have superior coordination, and that factor is decisive, especially against an exposed king.

1.Kc3



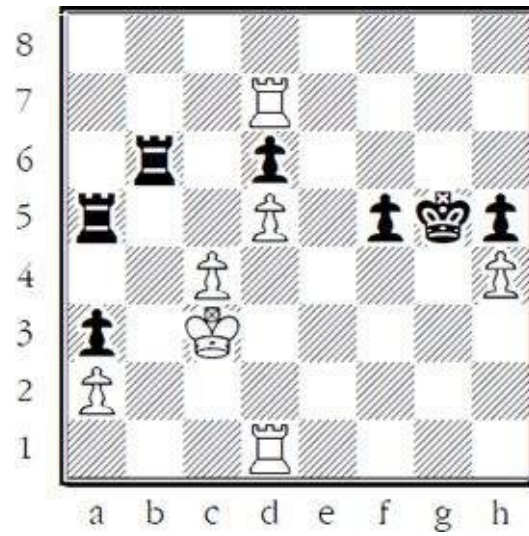
White avoids the check at b2 and makes his king more useful.

1...h5



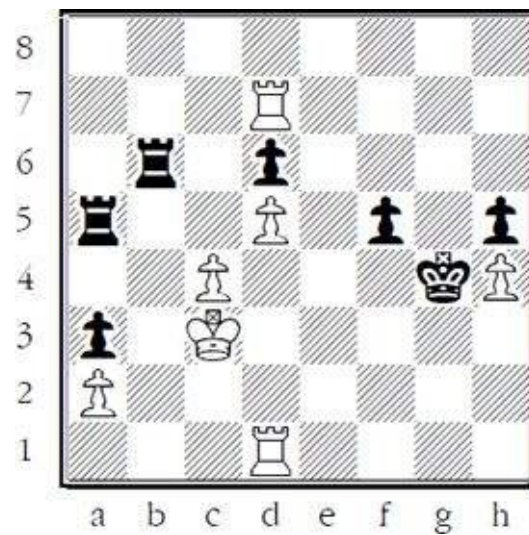
Black in turn saves his h-pawn, which might be used for shelter.

2.h4+!



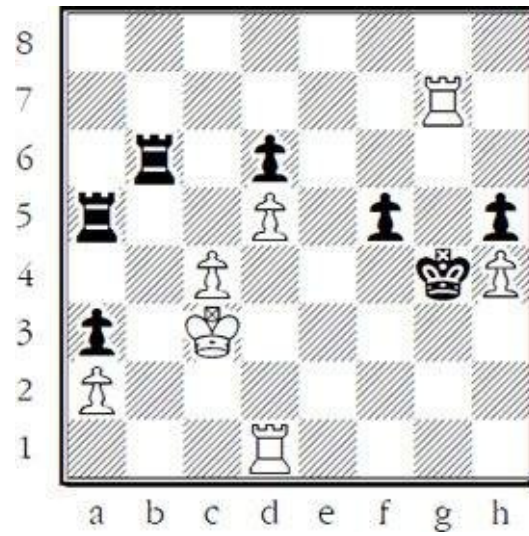
The pawn is safe, since 2...Kxh4 is met by 3.Rg7, and mate soon follows.

2...Kg4



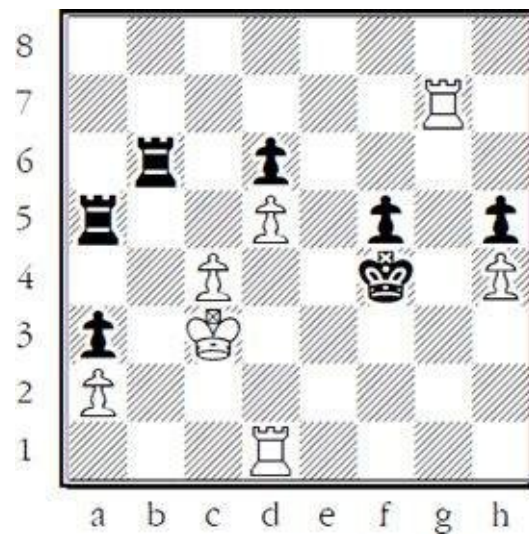
A big problem for Black is his a5-rook; it's doing nothing.

3.Rg7+



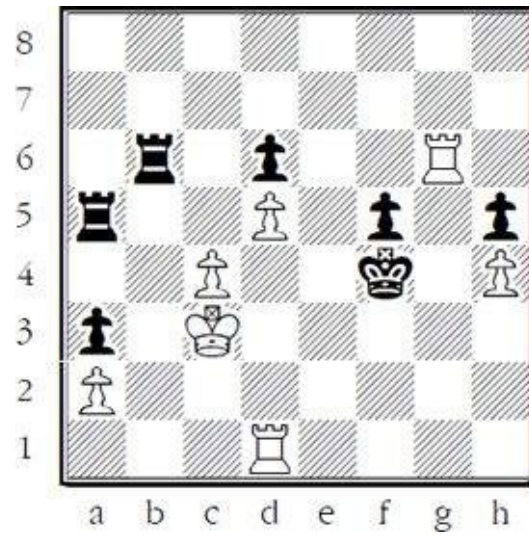
Black's king must go to the f-file to avoid mate along the h-file.

3...Kf4



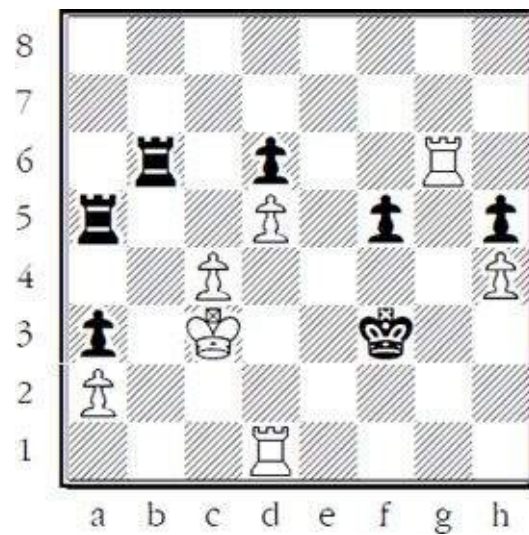
On 3...Kh3 White had 4.Rh1 mate.

4.Rg6!



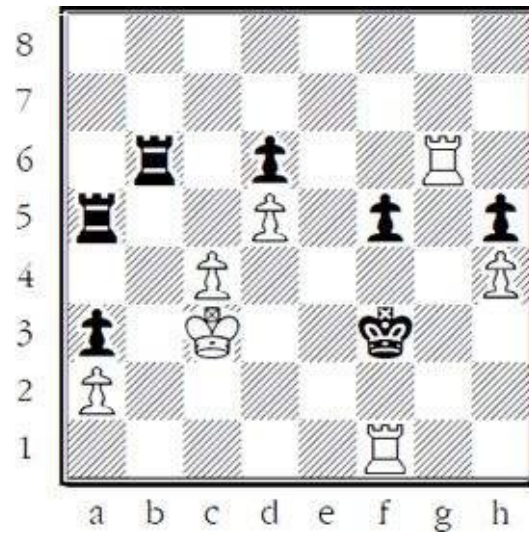
This small move seizes the sixth rank and gives the rook an anchor at e6.

4...Kf3



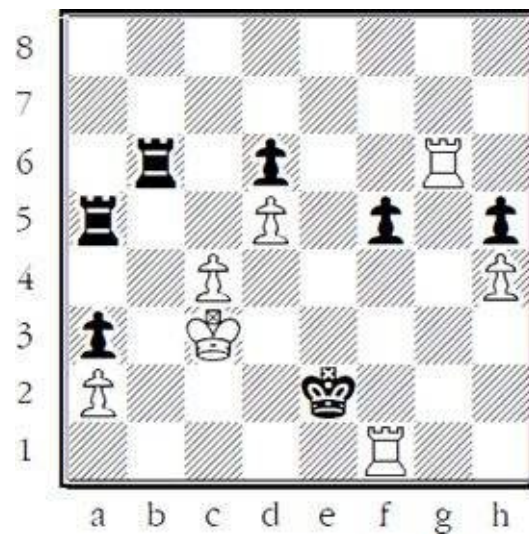
White was threatening a check at f1.

5.Rf1+



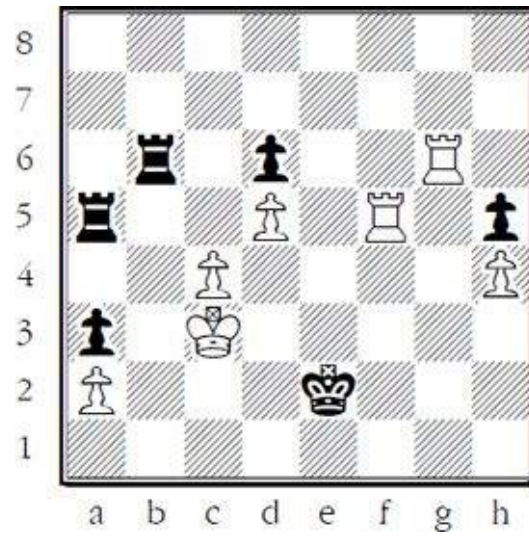
Not surprisingly, this check still works.

5...Ke2



Black hopes to find some refuge.

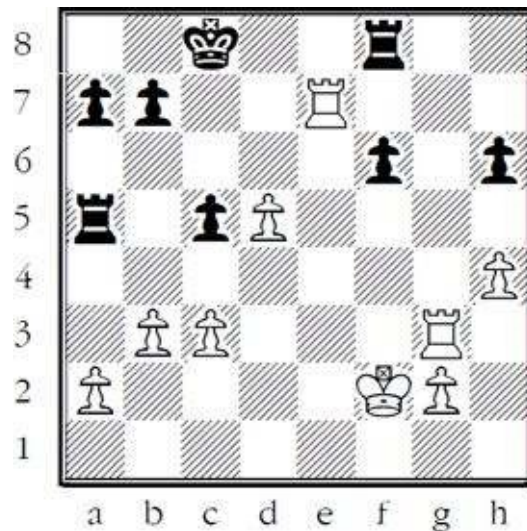
6.Rxf5



But this seals the deal. Looming on the horizon are Rg6-e6+ and Rf5-f1 mate.
(1-0)

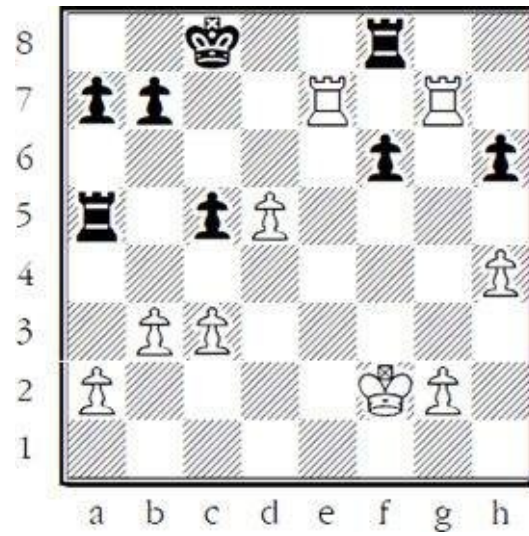
(13) Rubinstein vs. Salwe, 1906

White is up a pawn



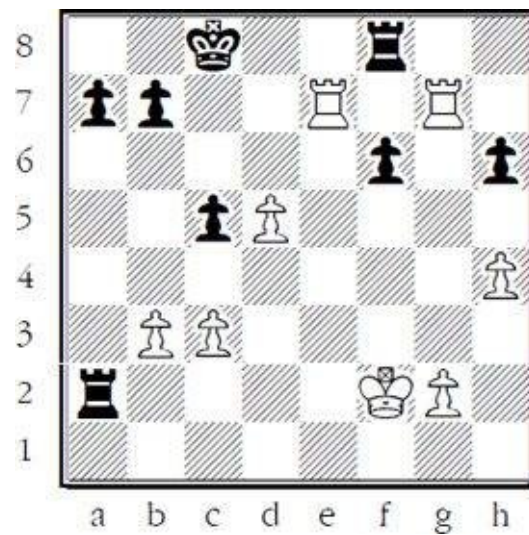
White is ahead by a pawn, but Black is ready to take a pawn back with check. Besides, in a four rook ending, activity often outweighs the difference of a pawn. Here, to be sure, White's rooks are better placed, with one on the 7th rank and another about to join it. Throw into the mix the dangerous passed pawn at d5, and White has all the makings of a winner. Rubinstein makes it look so simple.

1.Rgg7!



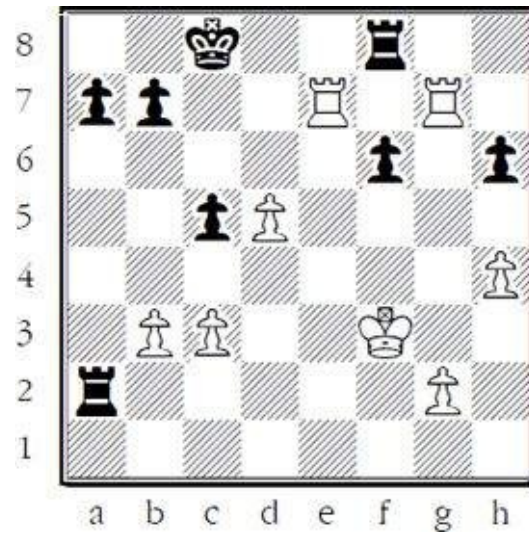
This is a decisive doubling.

1...Rxa2+



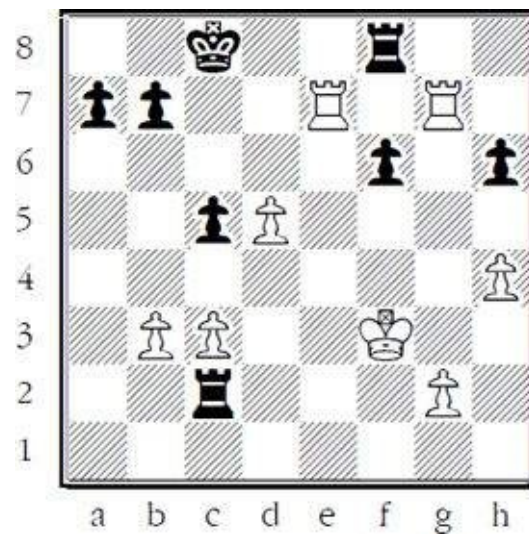
Black takes the pawn with check, but let's see if he can save his king.

2.Kf3



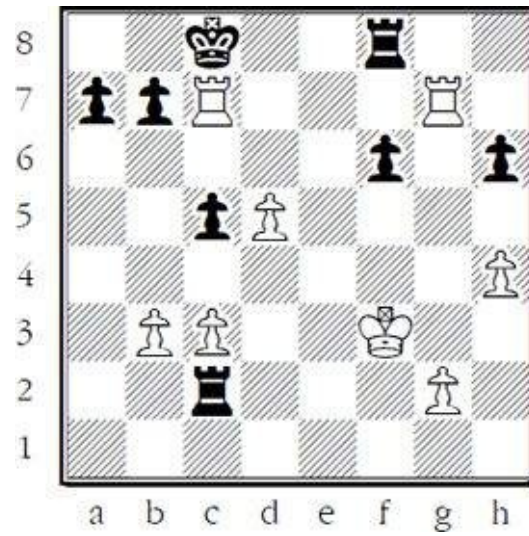
This king move looks possibly risky but actually it's not.

2...Rc2



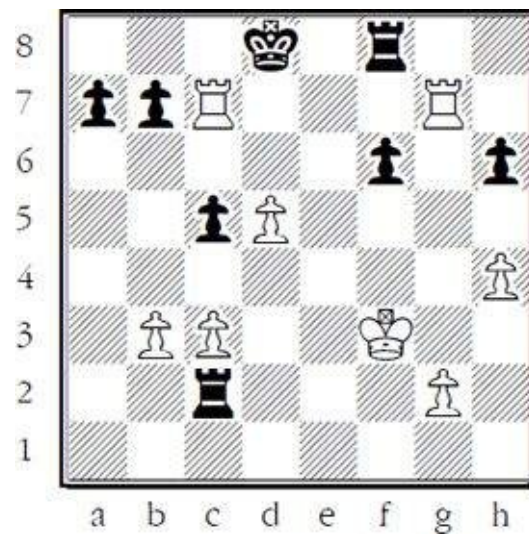
Black hopes to deflect the e7-rook to a defensive post at e3.

3.Rc7+



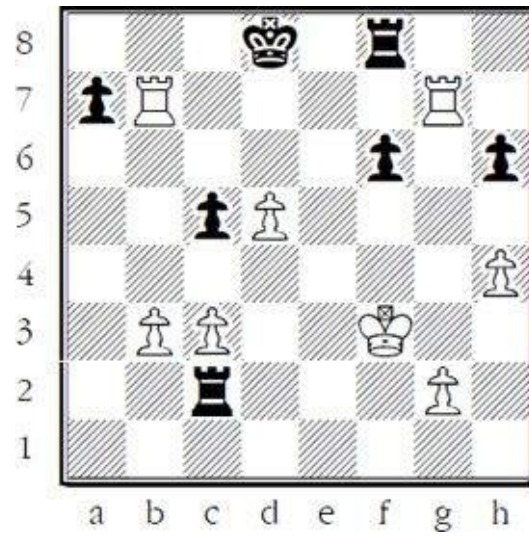
White checks before taking the b-pawn.

3...Kd8



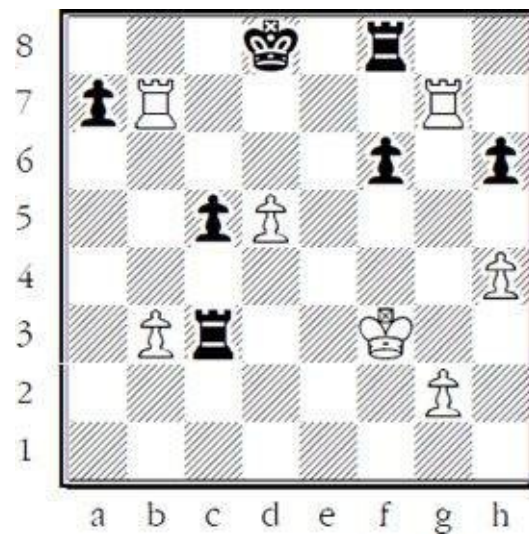
As bad as it looks, at least 3...Kb8 avoided immediate mate.

4.Rxb7



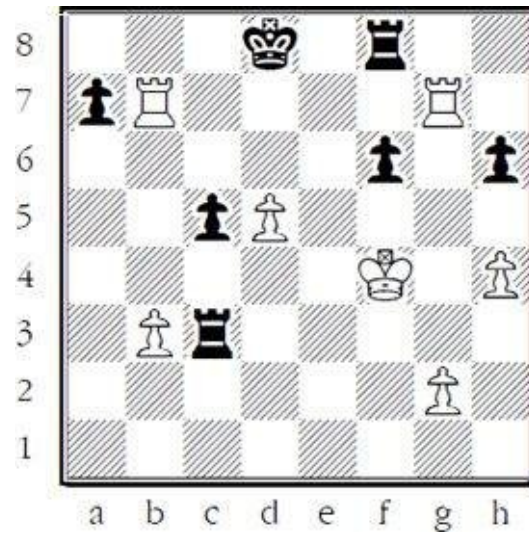
White now threatens mate at b8.

4...Rxc3+



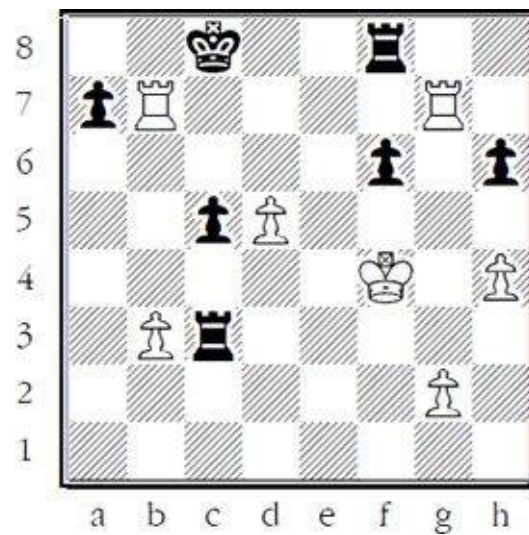
Black stops to take yet another pawn with check.

5.Kf4



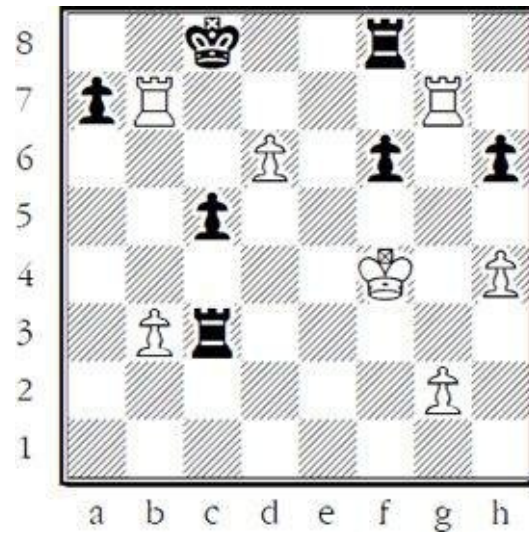
Again, White's king moves forward, fearless of enemy rook checks.

5...Kc8



The mate at b8 had to be stopped.

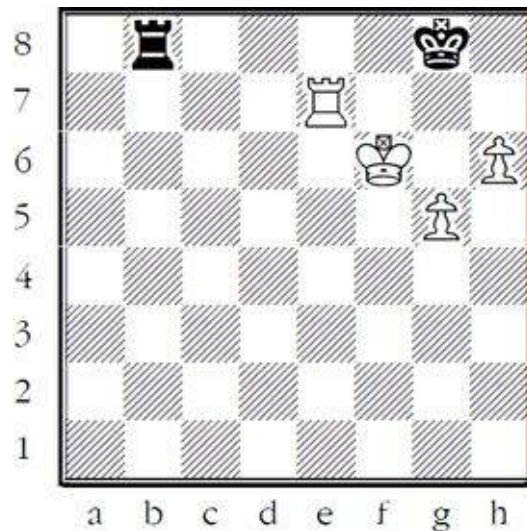
6.d6!



This supplies support for a check at c7. There's no stopping Rgc7+ and Rb8 mate. **(1-0)**

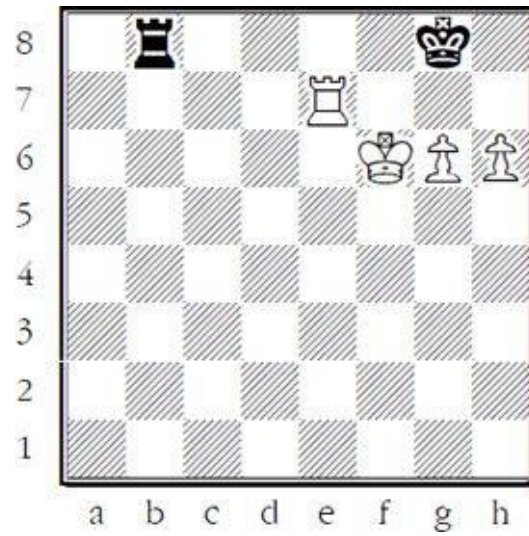
(14) Lasker vs. Tarrasch, 1908

White is up two pawns



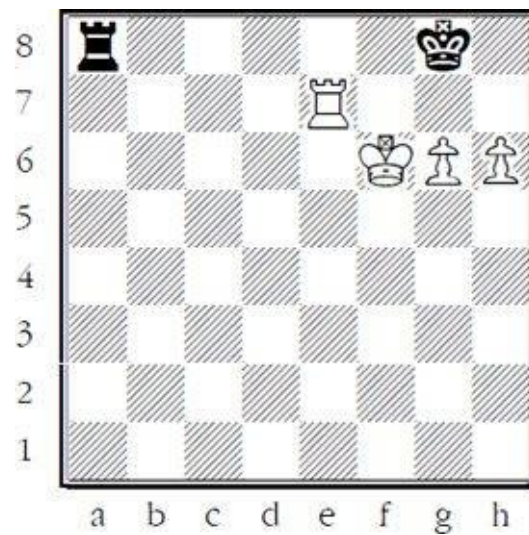
On the surface, this is a simple win. But the defender's rook, while patrolling the home rank, is potentially pesky. Moreover, there are all kinds of stalemate shots for the unwary. Push White's pawns precipitously and Black may suddenly have a way to ditch his rook and draw. But Lasker knows what he's doing. He has no intention of letting the advantage of connected pawns slip away.

1.g6



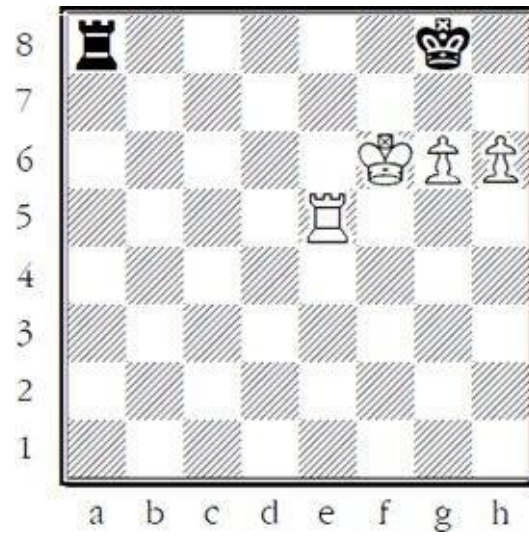
The pawns are becoming very menacing.

1...Ra8



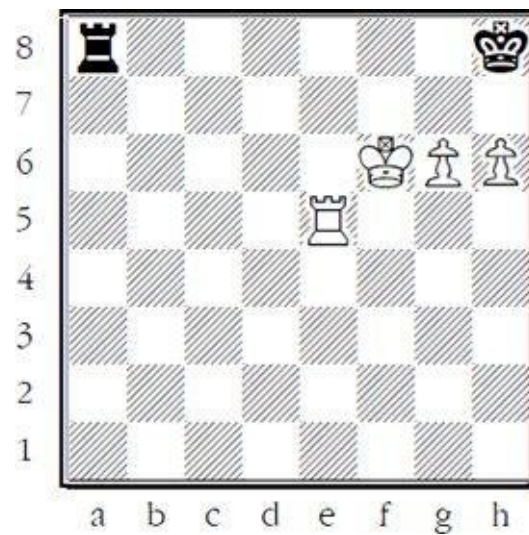
Black's rook keeps command of the home rank, waiting for a chance to sac for stalemate.

2.Re5!



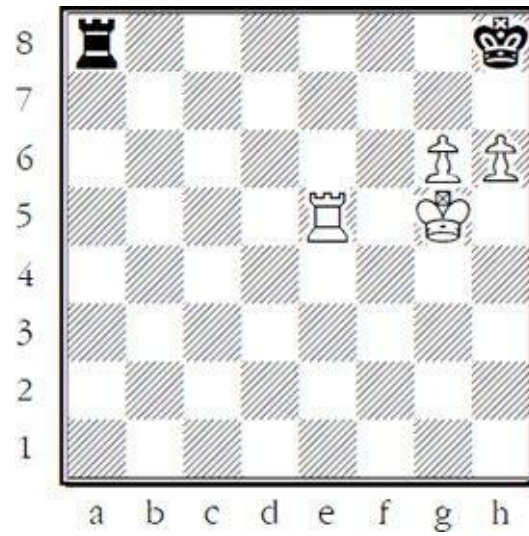
This shift threatens 3.h7+ Kh8 4.g7+ Kxh7 5.Rh5+ Kg8 6.Rh8 mate.

2...Kh8



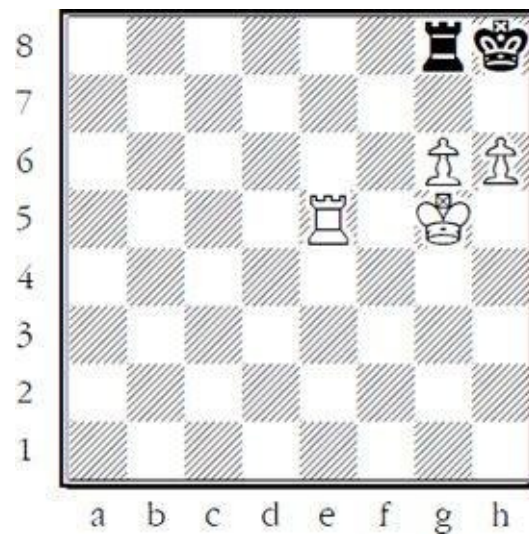
Black's move to the corner at least avoids the previous variation.

3.Kg5



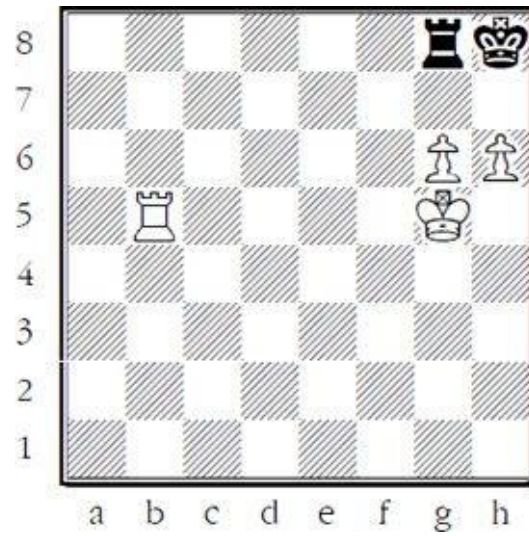
White gets ready for the final push.

3...Rg8



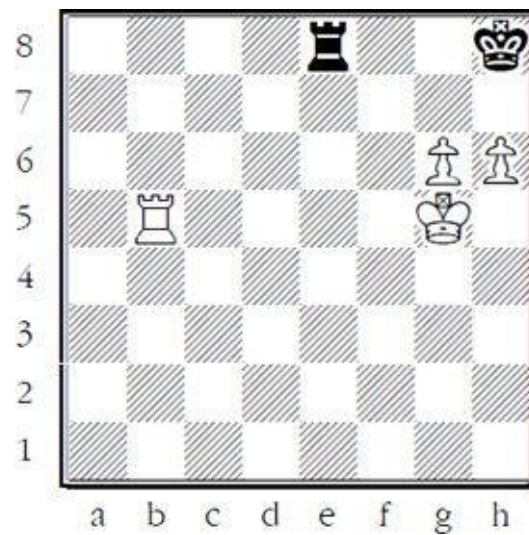
A last hope: if 4 h7, Black has 4...Rxg6+, when 5.Kxg6 is stalemate.

4.Rb5



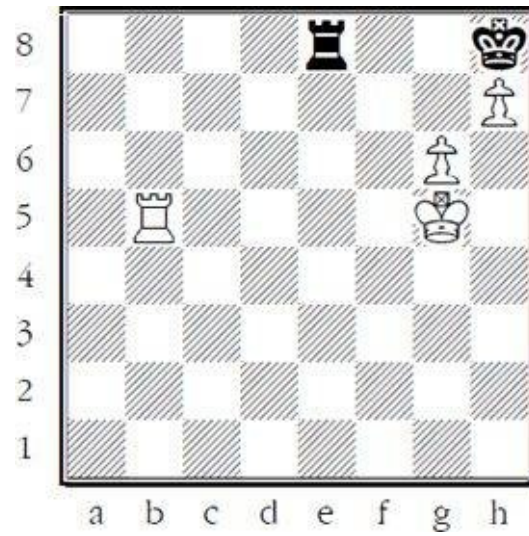
White plays a waiting move, forcing Black's rook off the g-file.

4...Re8



Black hopes for hope.

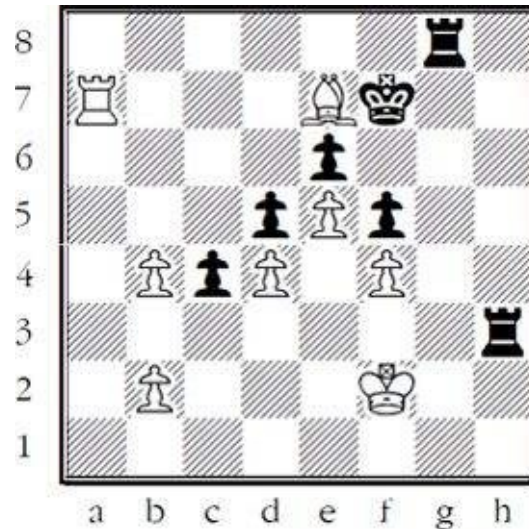
5.h7



Mate in a few moves can no longer be avoided. A sample conclusion might be 5...Kg7 6.Rb7+ Kh8 7.Kh6 and mate in two moves. **(1-0)**

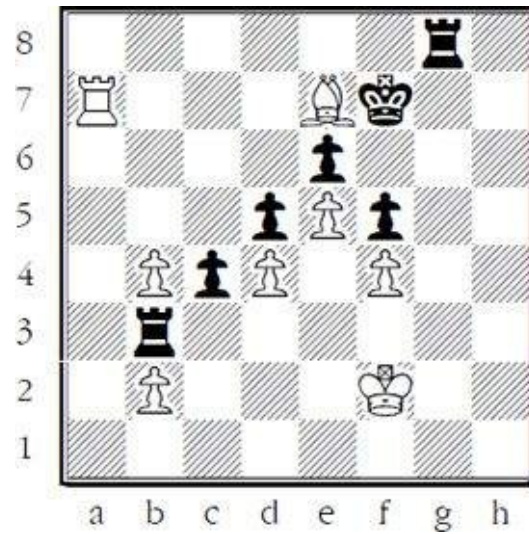
(15) Janowski vs. Capablanca, 1916

Black is up the Exchange for a pawn



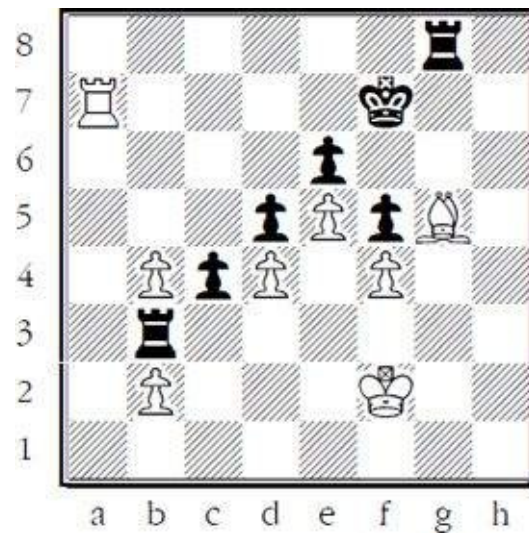
In this imbalanced position, White's compensation for being down the Exchange is a passed b-pawn. Using the seventh rank, he also may have a tactic or two up his sleeve. But then there are White's own problems. His b2-pawn is attackable, and his king doesn't have any shelter. If Black can get his rooks functioning as a team, the end of the endgame might not be far off. Leave it to Capablanca to find the simplest way.

1...Rb3



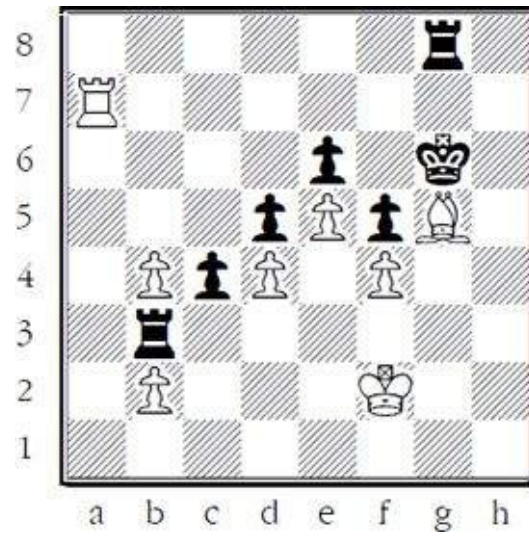
This wins one pawn and stops the advance of another. It also gives the rook attack space.

2.Bg5+



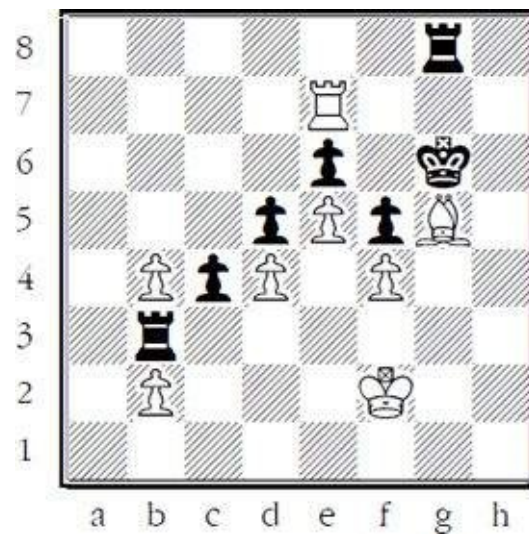
White uses the discovery to close the g-file, shutting out the g8-rook.

2...Kg6



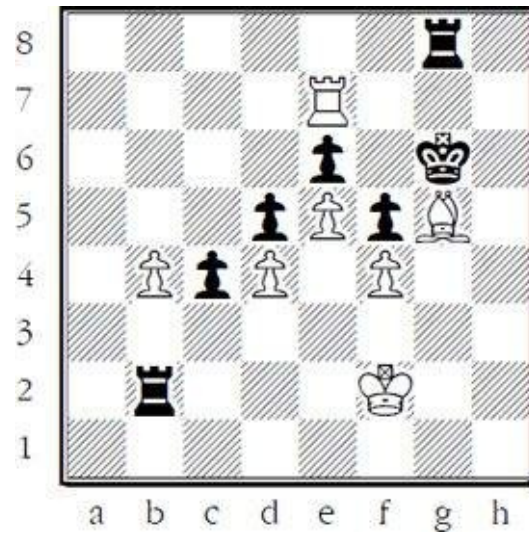
Black's king keeps an eye on the kingside.

3.Re7



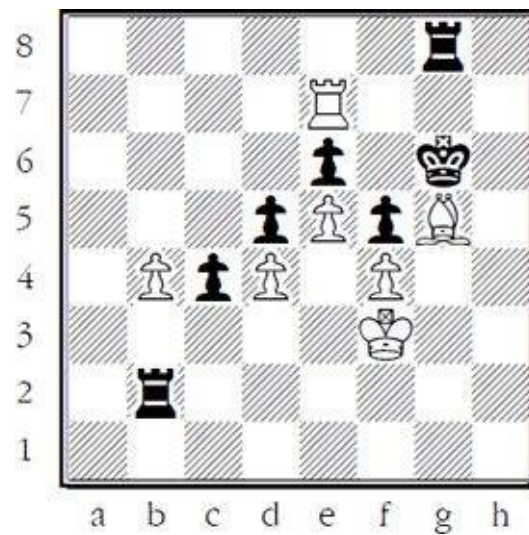
The first rewards of a rook on the seventh rank: Black's e-pawn must now fall.

3...Rxb2+



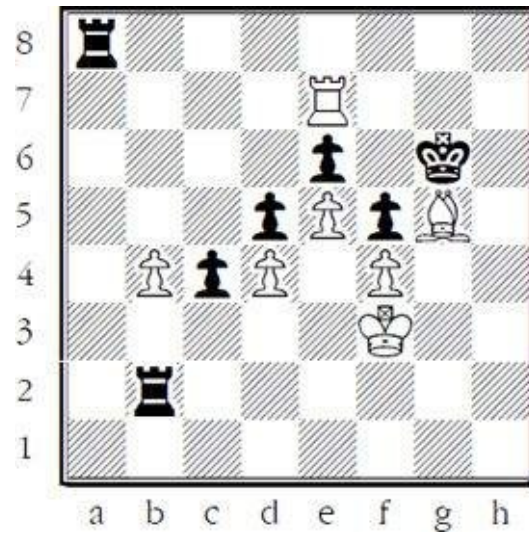
The b2-pawn goes with check, and Black's rook gets active on the seventh rank.

4.Kf3



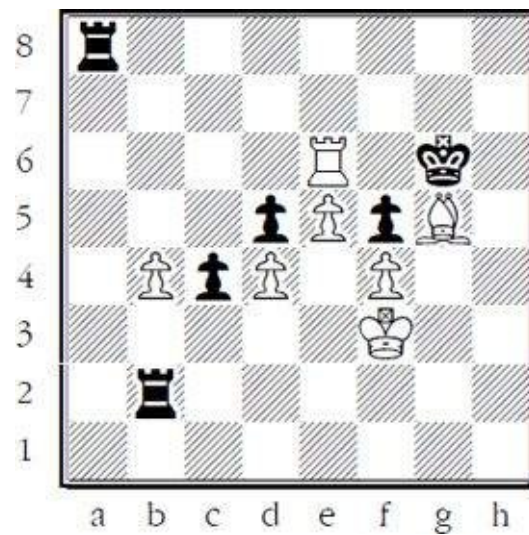
Insignificantly better was 4.Kg3, considering what soon happens.

4...Ra8!



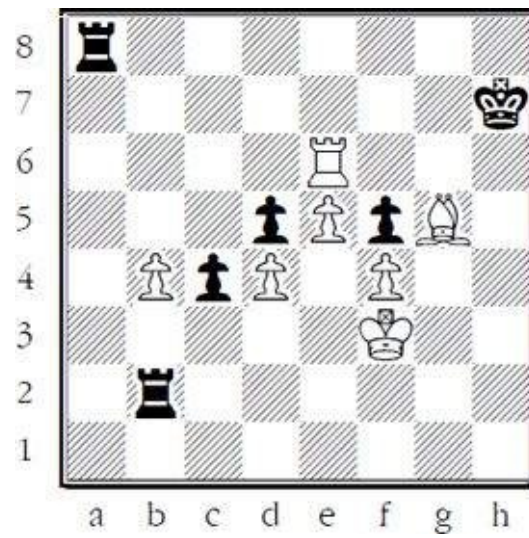
Immediately, Black threatens mate and activates his other rook.

5.Rxe6+



White gains a pawn with check, a hard transaction to turn down.

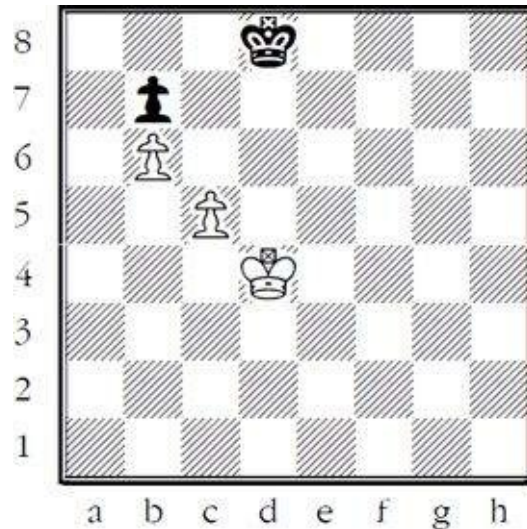
5...Kh7



White's king is trapped in a walled city. Meanwhile, 6.Kg3 Ra3+ 7.Kh4 Rh2 is mate. **(0-1)**

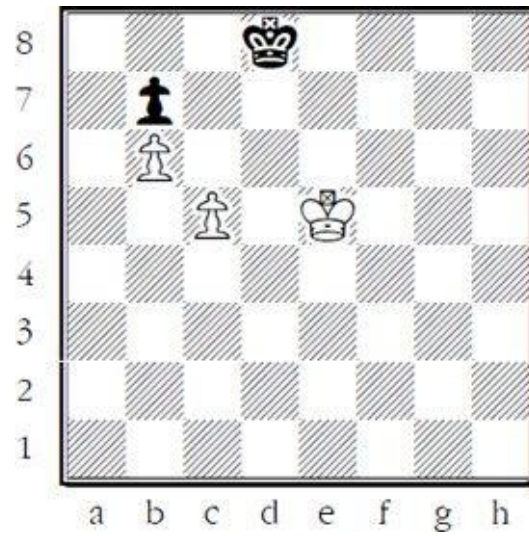
(16) Euwe vs. Von Hartingsvelt, 1922

White is up a pawn



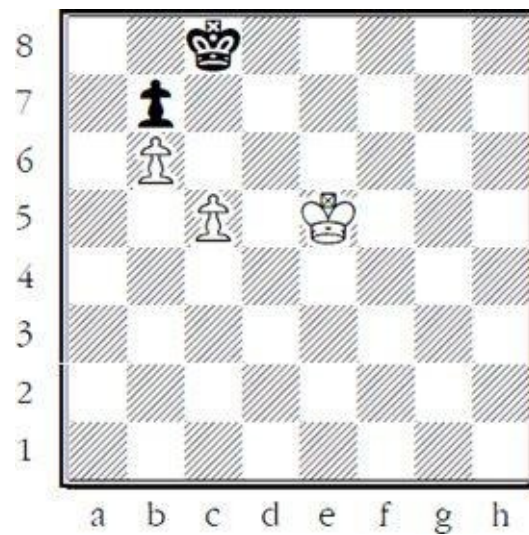
Before us is a simple pawn ending, White having an extra c-pawn. Black has the opposition, but it is of no consequence here, since White can gain it back whenever taking the opposition becomes meaningful. Moreover, White's king can stroll around a bit more than Black's, since if Black's king leaves the queenside, a pawn advance creates a breakthrough. The best Black can do is lure White into a mistake. But Euwe, a future world champion, doesn't swallow the bait.

1.Ke5



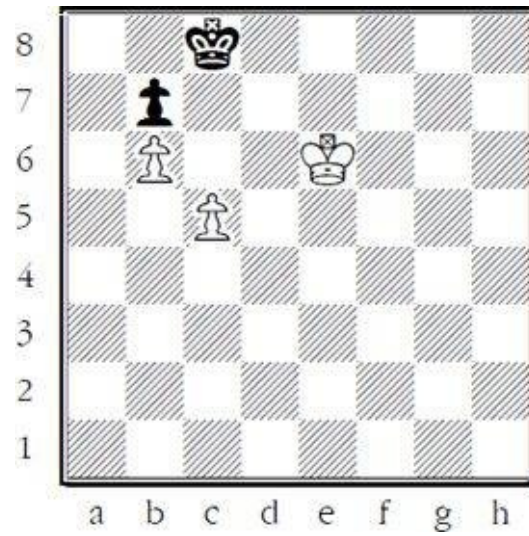
If Black now plays 1...Kd7, White takes the opposition, 2.Kd5.

1...Kc8



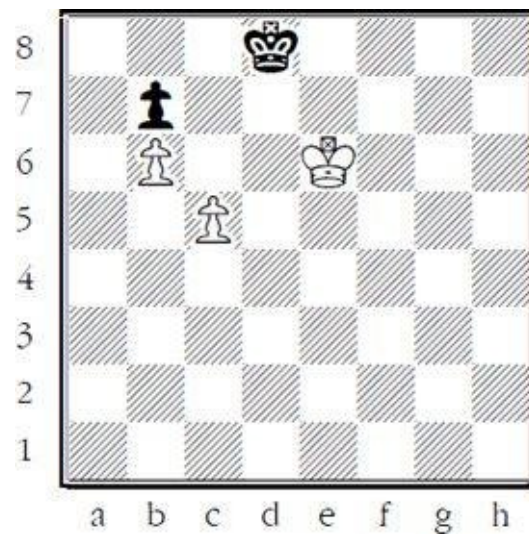
Black plays for 2.Kd6, when he can follow with 2...Kd8.

2.Ke6



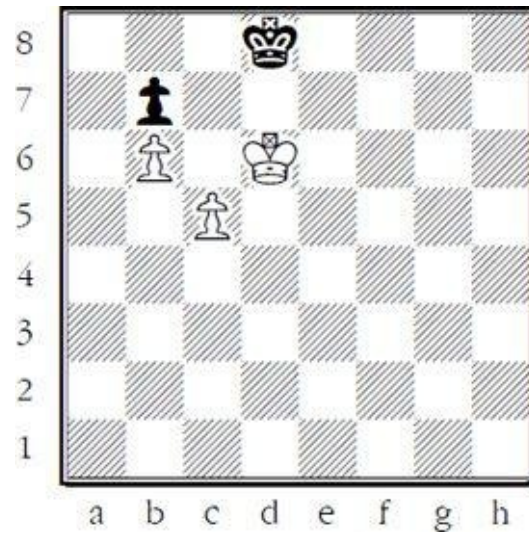
White keeps the opposition diagonally.

2...Kd8



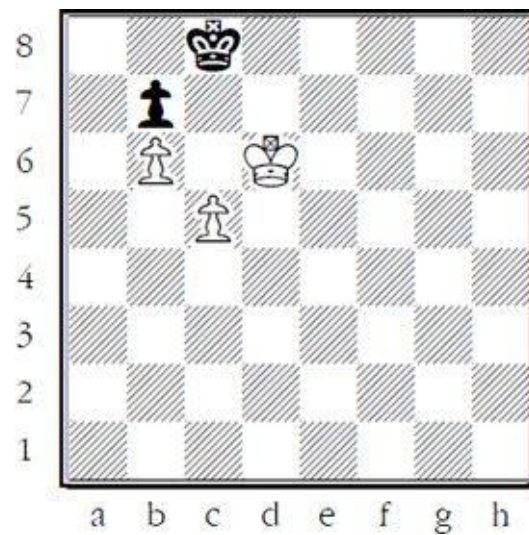
Black resists moving to the corner, still trying to keep White's king out.

3.Kd6



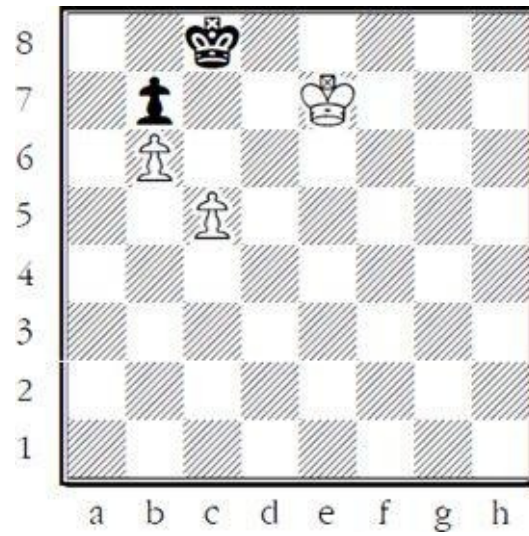
White again maintains the opposition.

3...Kc8



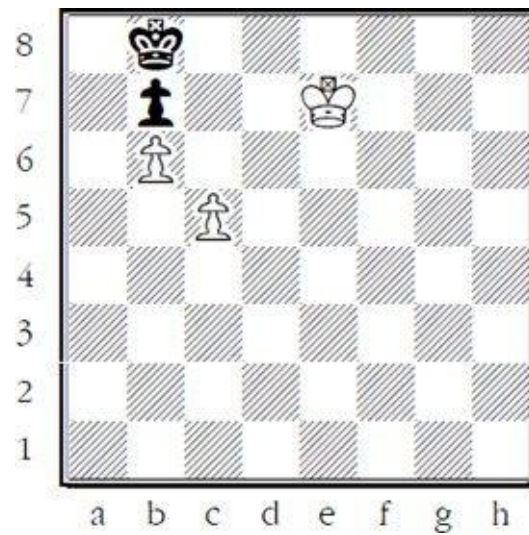
Obviously, 3...Ke8 loses at once to 4.Kc7, or better yet, 4.c6.

4.Ke7



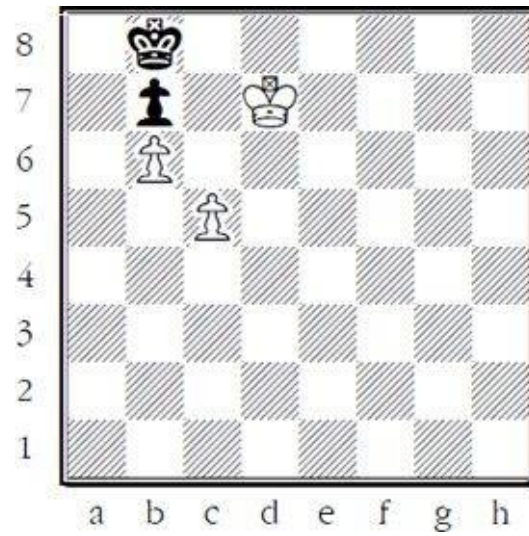
A mistake would have been 4. c6?, when 4...Kb8 5.Kd7 bxc6! 6.Kxc6 Kc8 draws.

4...Kb8



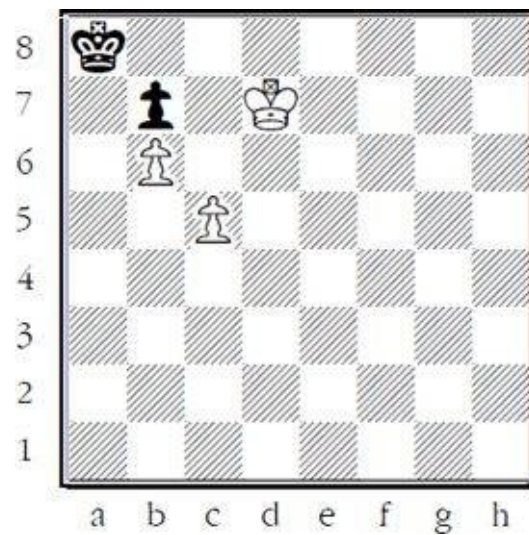
This is Black's only move.

5.Kd7



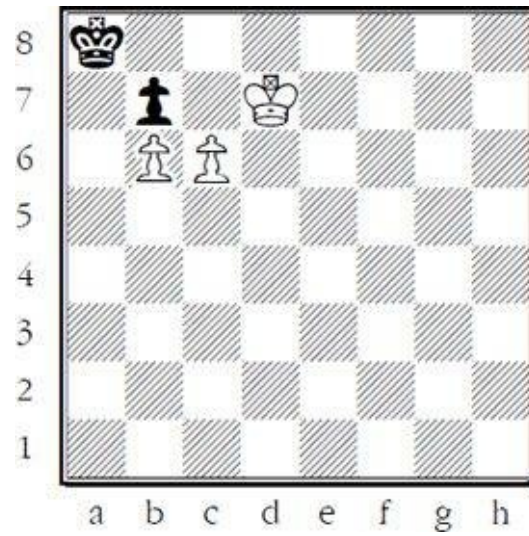
White keeps on moving in, driving Black's king to the corner.

5...Ka8



This is Black's only move, but he still hopes for White to make a mistake.

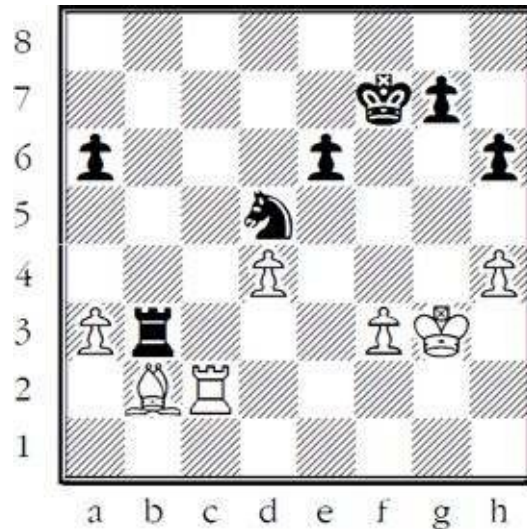
6.c6!



Naturally, White avoids 6.Kc7 stalemate. Now, White mates in no more than four moves. **(1–0)**

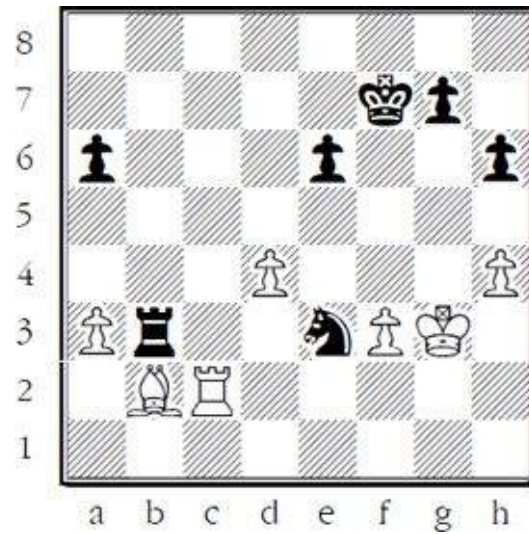
(17) Filipcic vs. Lasker, 1924

Black has a knight for a bishop



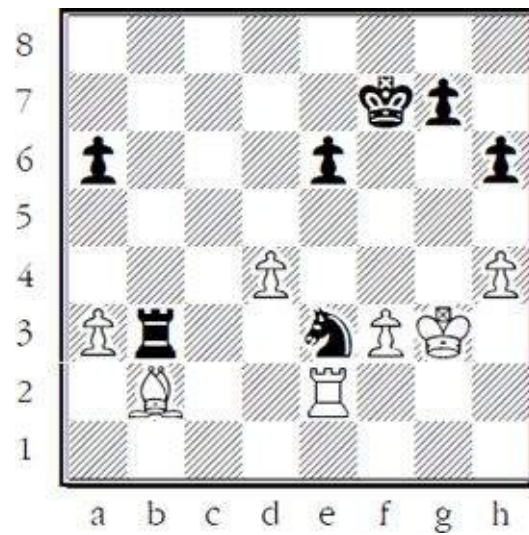
The chief assets in the position favor Black. He has a good knight vs. a bad bishop, a more active rook than White's, fewer pawn islands, and the move. It also turns out that White's king is not as shielded as it may seem, with Black having a number of ways to penetrate White's armor. Leave it to the consummate Lasker to find how the actual piercing should go.

1...Ne3



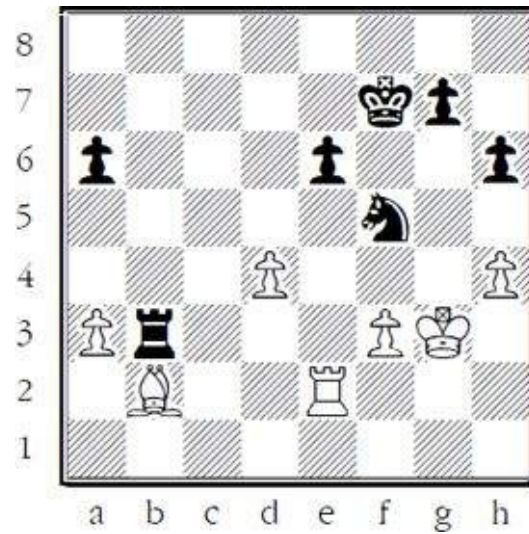
The knight pirouettes toward White's rook, ready to go back for the real target, his king.

2.Re2



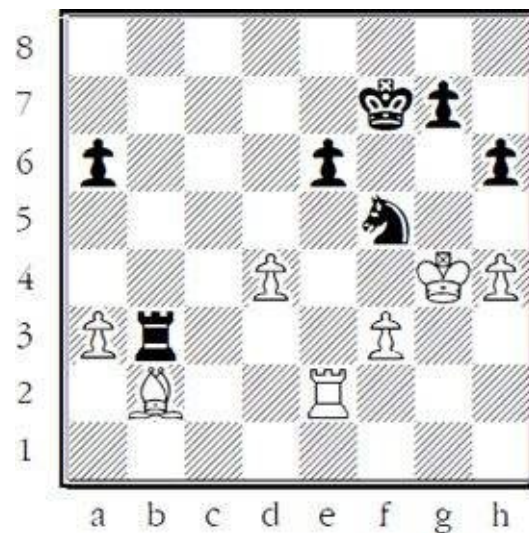
This avoids loss of a rook, but saving the game may be another matter.

2...Nf5+



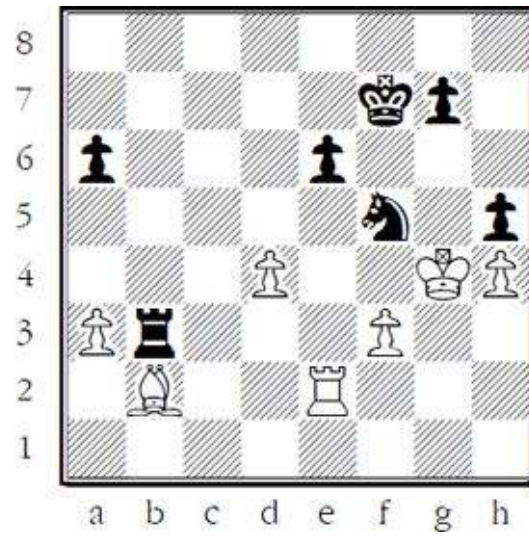
The weaknesses of White's isolated pawns have become even more obvious.

3.Kg4



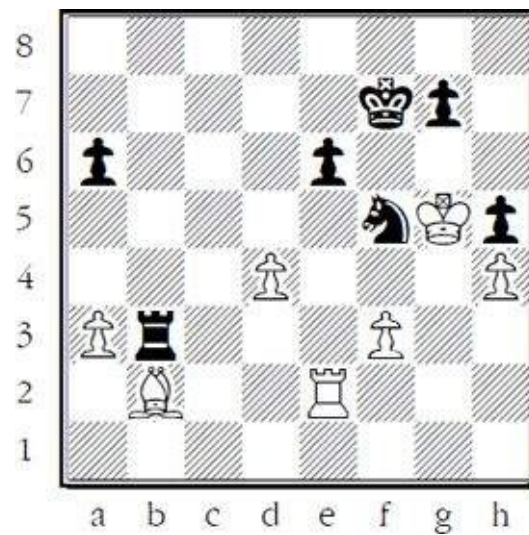
This was White's only move to avoid immediate material loss.

3...h5+!



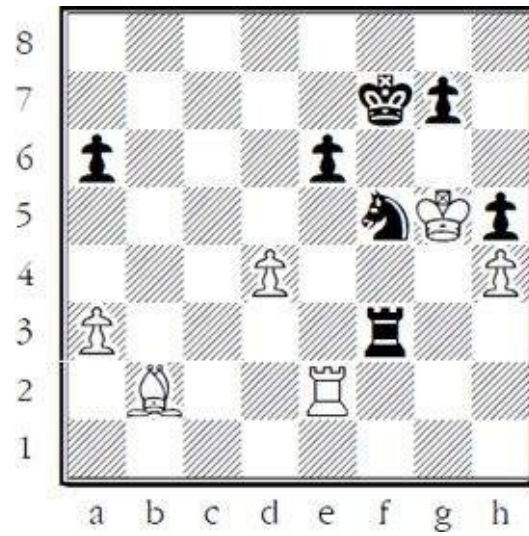
The h-pawn can't be captured, there being a knight fork at g3.

4.Kg5



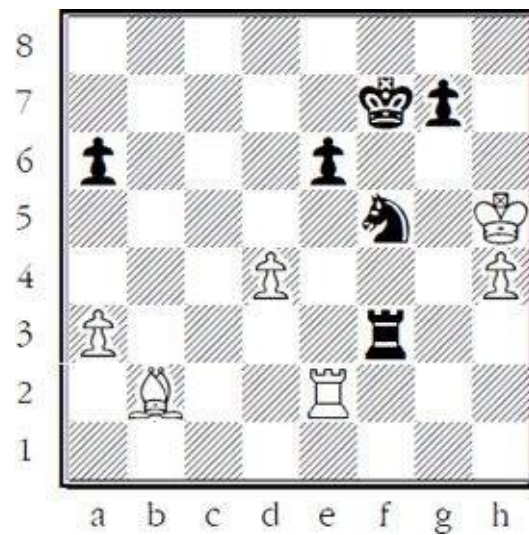
White avoids the fork but the noose is about to tighten.

4...Rxf3



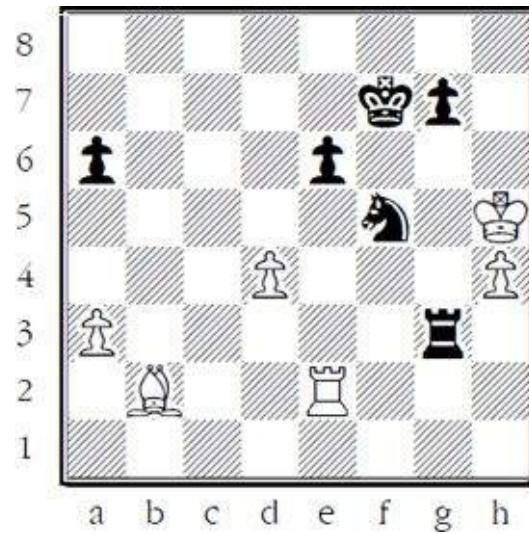
At the least, Black threatens Nf5-e3 and Rf3-f5 mate.

5.Kxh5



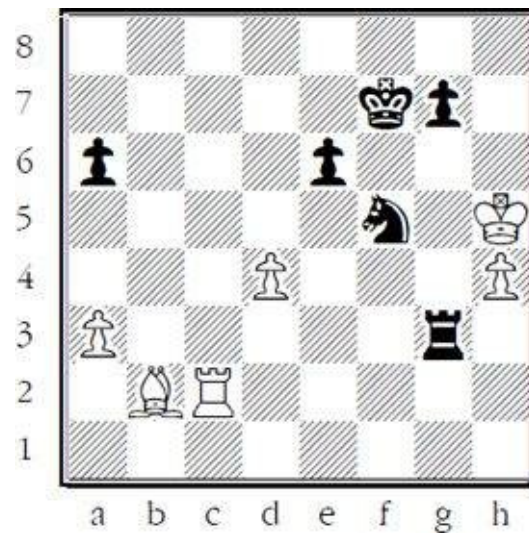
On 5...Ng3+ White has 6.Kg4

5...Rg3!



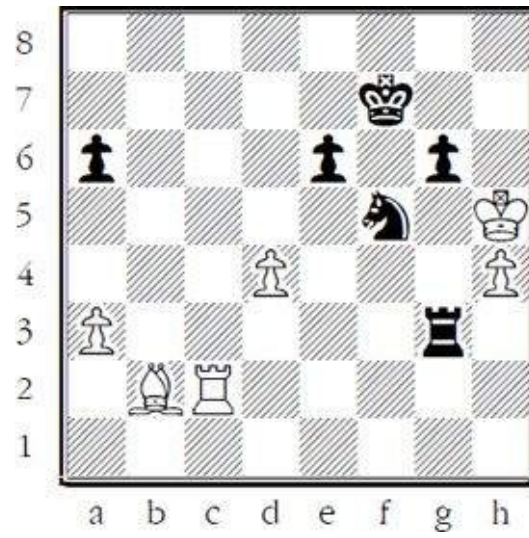
Black's rook beautifully confines the enemy king to an outside row. The threat is 6...g6 mate.

6.Rc2



Even the sac 6.Rxe6 wouldn't have stopped 6...g6+ 7.Rxg6 Rxg6 and mate next move

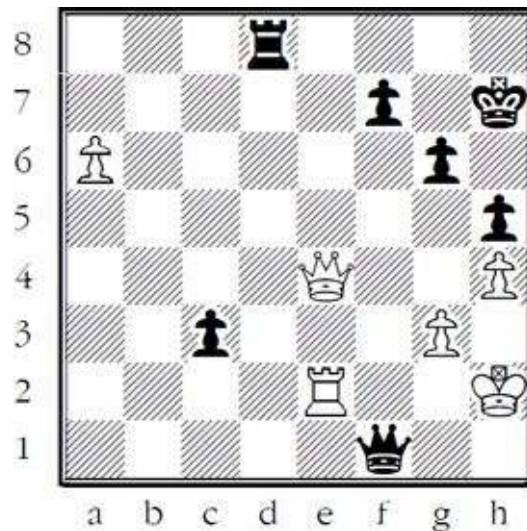
6...g6 mate



According to the laws of chess, this is mate. **(0-1)**

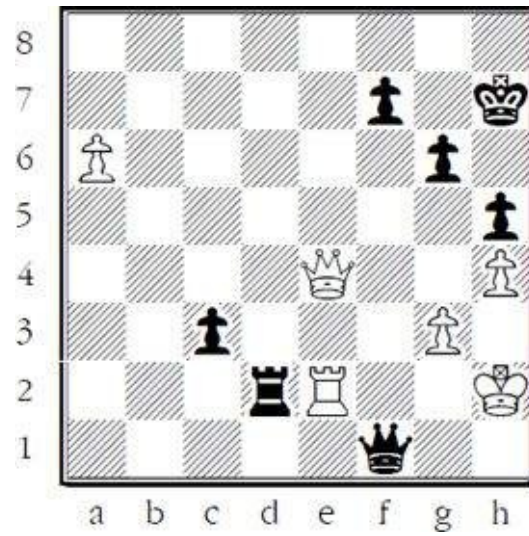
(18) Capablanca vs. Alekhine, 1927

Black is up a pawn



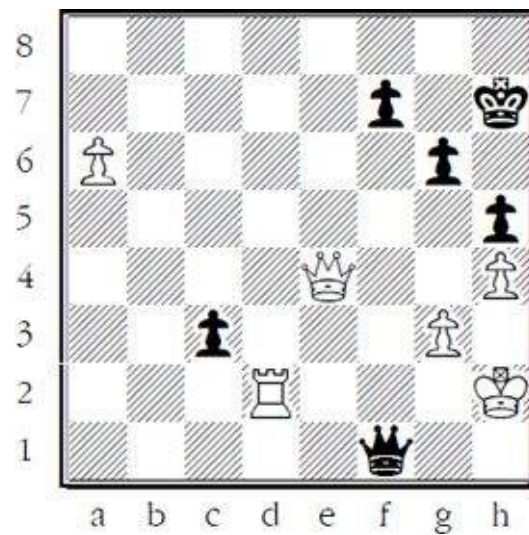
Black is ahead by a pawn, but it's the condition of the white king that seals White's fate. It's simply too exposed. Still, it looks superficially that White is holding on (well, almost). In the end, which comes up fairly quickly, both sides queen, with Black retaining the move and the winning edge. True, White winds up with two queens for defense, but Black's two queens for attack are a bit too much even for the Cuban wonder.

1...Rd2!



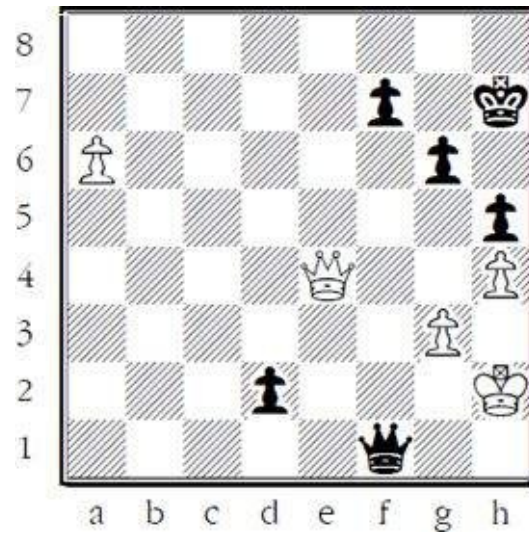
Black pins his winning hopes on this powerful intrusion.

2.Rxd2



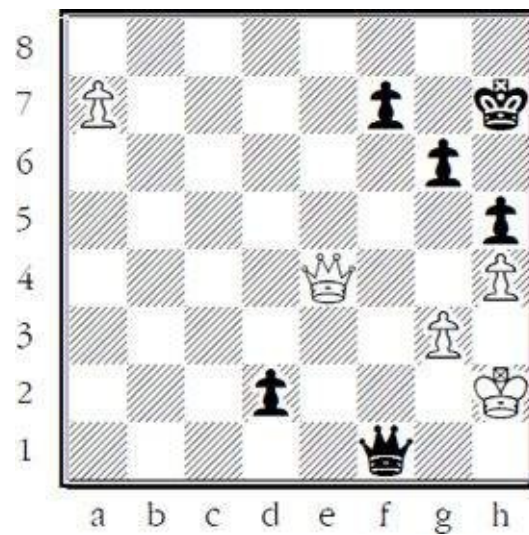
This is the most practical continuation, but it doesn't save the day.

2...cxd2



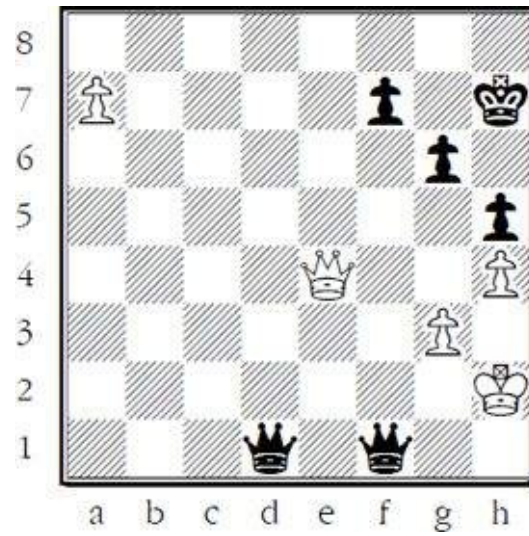
White has no checks and can't stop Black's pawn from queening.

3.a7



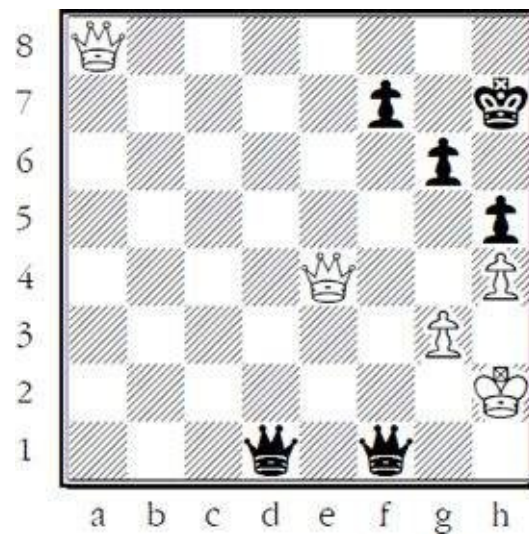
But he can make a queen of his own.

3...d1Q



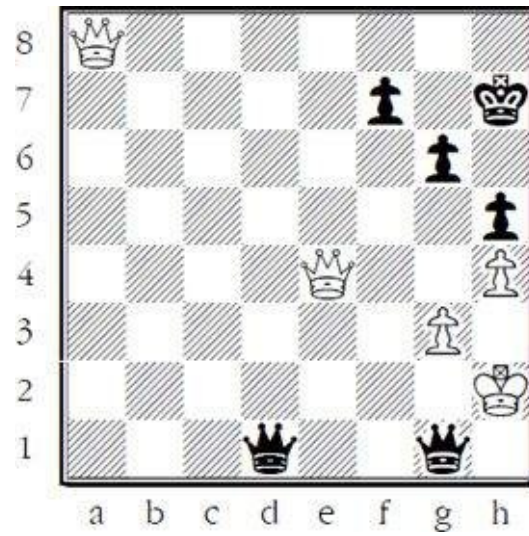
Black has several mating ideas in mind.

4.a8Q



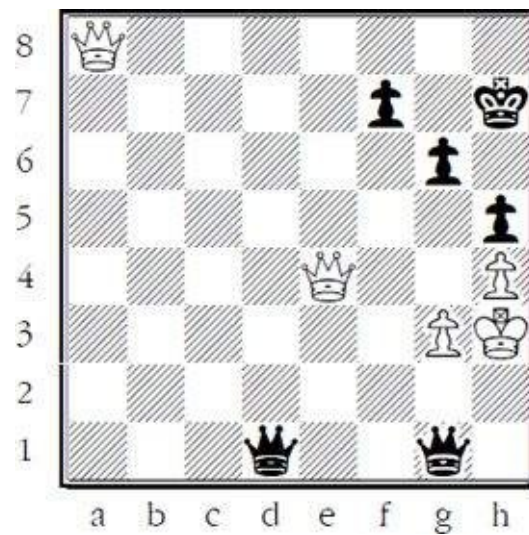
But White has two queens, too, and they defend each other.

4...Qg1+



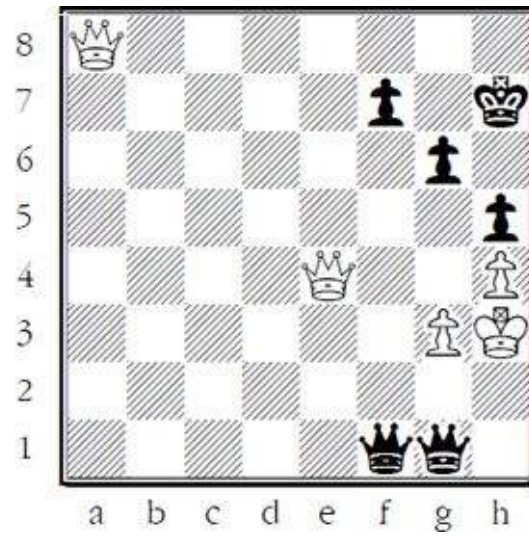
White's king is forced to h3.

5.Kh3



With White's two queens aligned diagonally, it seems there's a chance to avert mate.

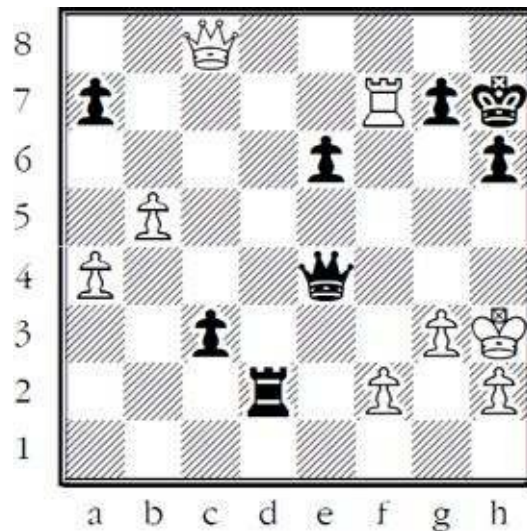
5...Qdf1+



But this check ends all resistance. If 6.Qg2, the pin allows 6...Qh1 mate. **(0–1)**

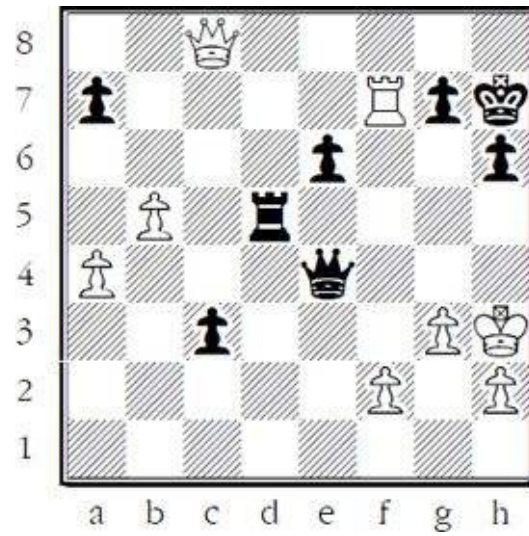
(19) Bolgoljubow vs. Alekhine, 1929

Black is even



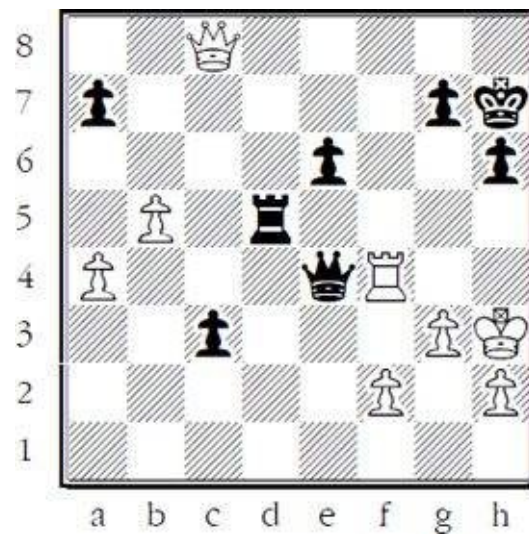
A wild position is before us. It's an ending of queen and rook vs. queen and rook, with each major piece capable of delivering a knockout punch. Here, not only does Black have a dangerous passed pawn, but White's king is rather precariously placed. But there are still some nice moves to find, and Alekhine, then world champion, indeed was most adept at finding them. He did.

1...Rd5!



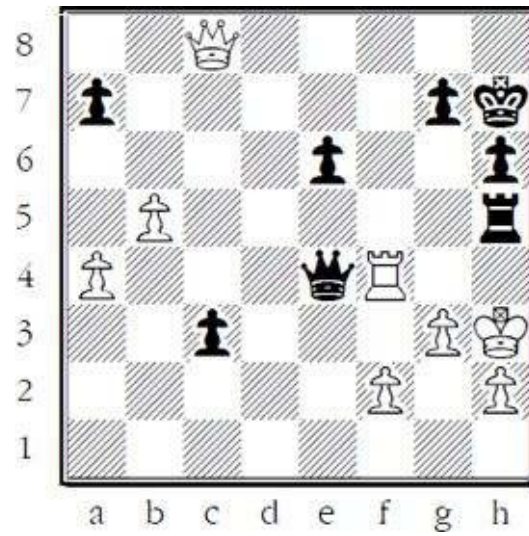
Black centralizes the rook and prepares for a mating shift.

2.Rf4



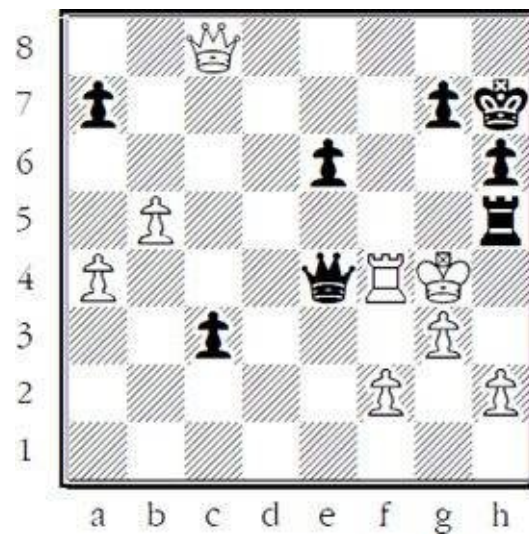
White creates the possibility of shelter on the fourth rank.

2...Rh5+



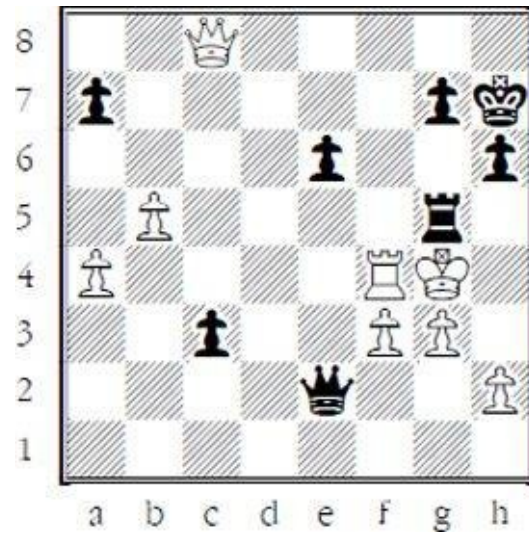
Since 3.Rh4 Rxd4+ 4.gxh4 Qf3 mate is in the air, White opts to run for it

3.Kg4



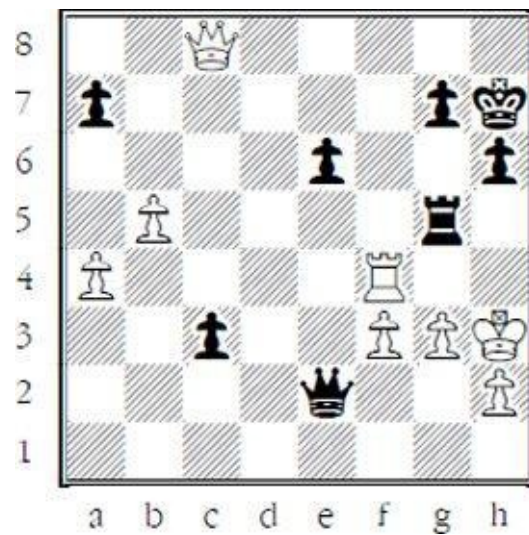
Black's queen and rook are apparently hanging.

3...Qe2+



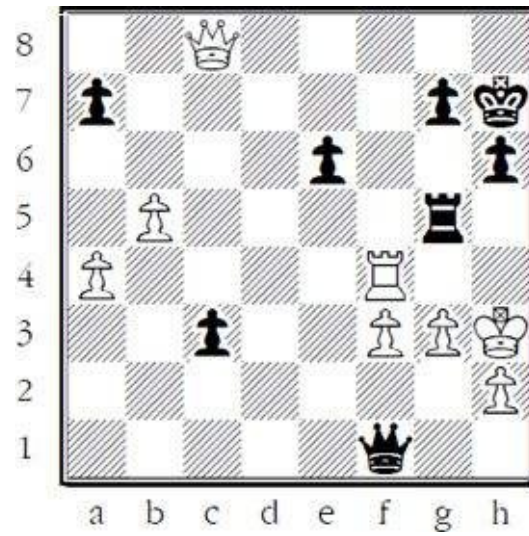
No rest for the weary. White's king must move to the h-file.

5.Kh3



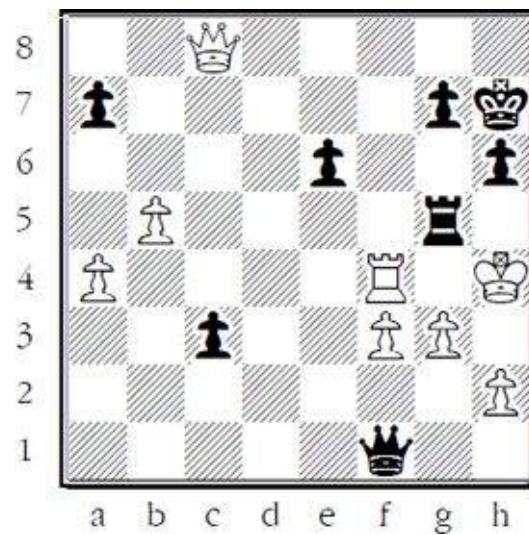
On 5.Kh4, Black had 5...Qxh2 mate.

5...Qf1+



The checks keep coming.

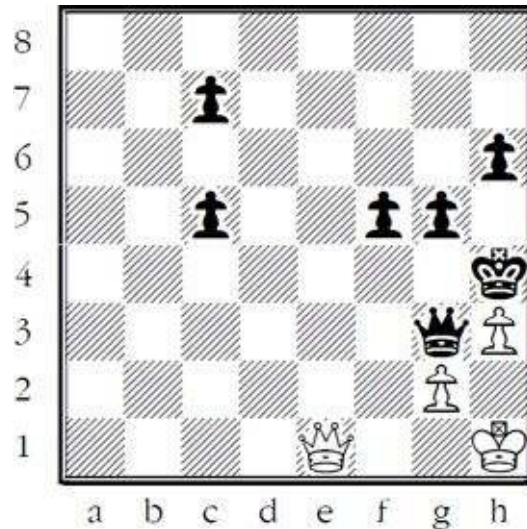
6.Kh4



Here White chose to stop, seeing how 6...Rh5+ 7.Kxh5 Qh3+ 8.Rh4 Qf5 is mate.
(0-1)

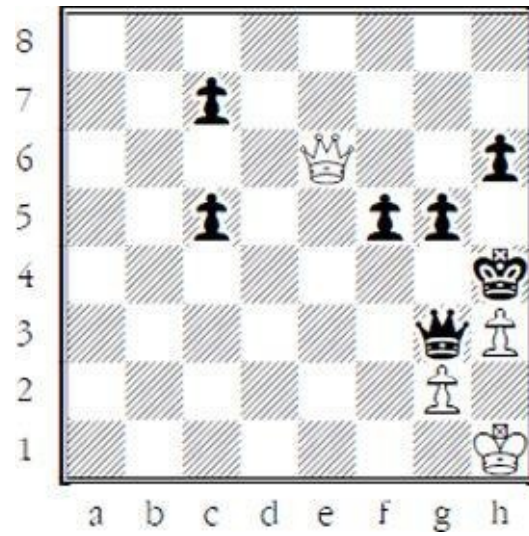
(20) Levinfish vs. Romanovsky, 1933

White is down three pawns



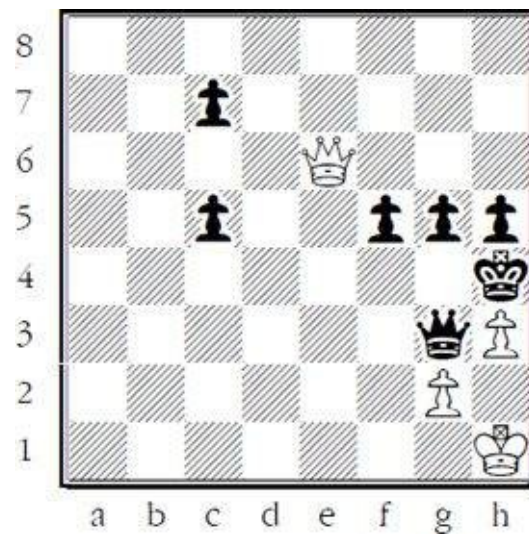
In this queen endgame, White is down three pawns. But with queens on the board, there could be lots of potential tactics brewing. Neither king is quite safe. That's key to White's resistance. Certainly, Black would be happy with a queen trade, but don't count on it happening if White can help it. Who would have guessed what lies in store for the superior side? What's this world coming to? You can't take anything for granted.

1.Qe6!



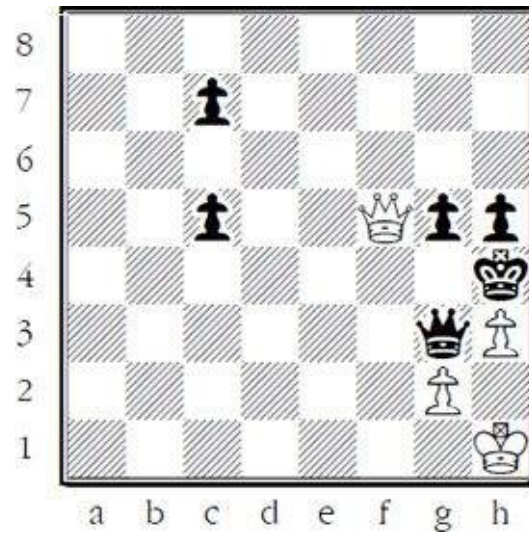
White avoids the trade and issues a serious threat.

1...h5



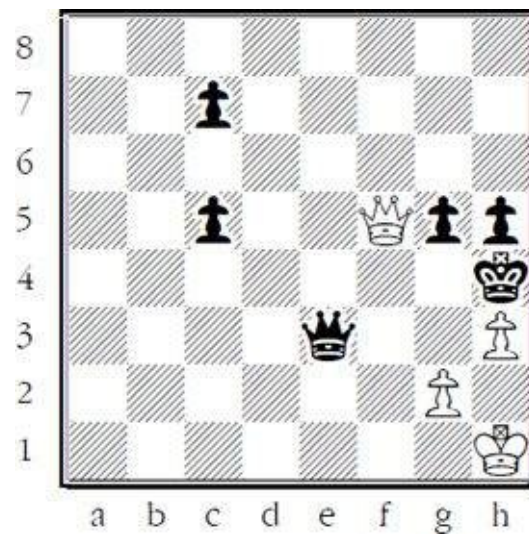
Black had to cope with the mate threat at h6.

2.Qxf5



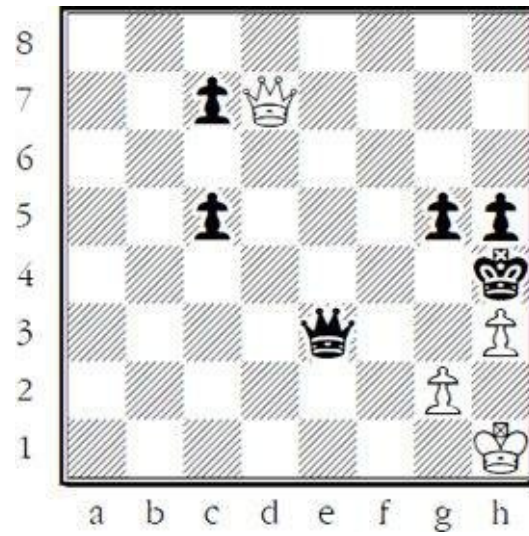
Now Black is ahead by only two pawns.

2...Qe3



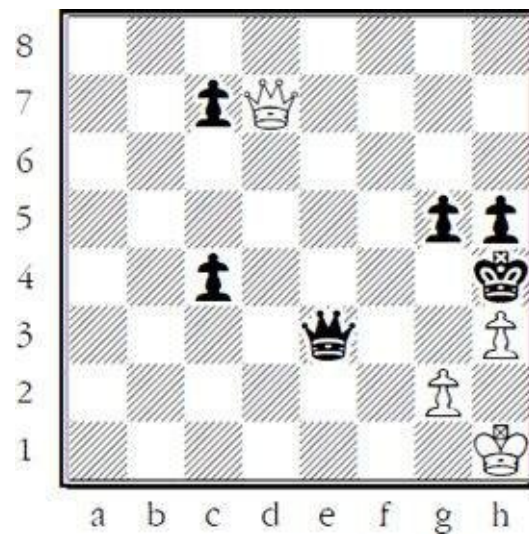
Black defends his c5-pawn and centralizes his queen a bit.

3.Qd7



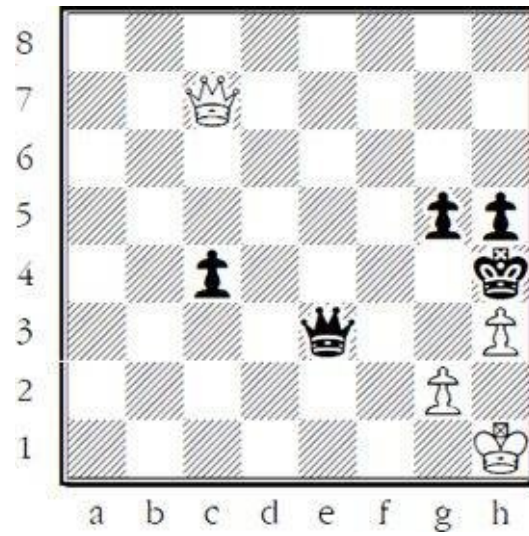
White keeps his own queen active and menacing.

3...c4



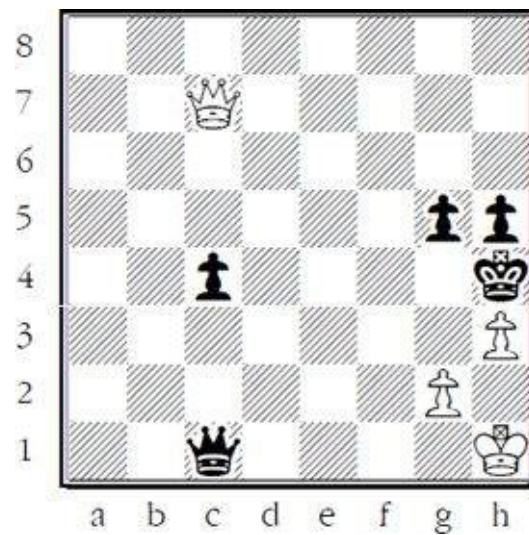
The object of a passed pawn is to use it as a threat to queen.

4.Qxc7



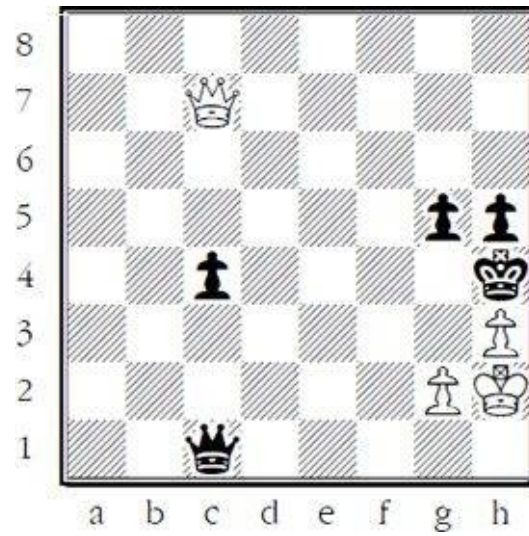
Now Black is up a mere pawn.

4...Qc1+?



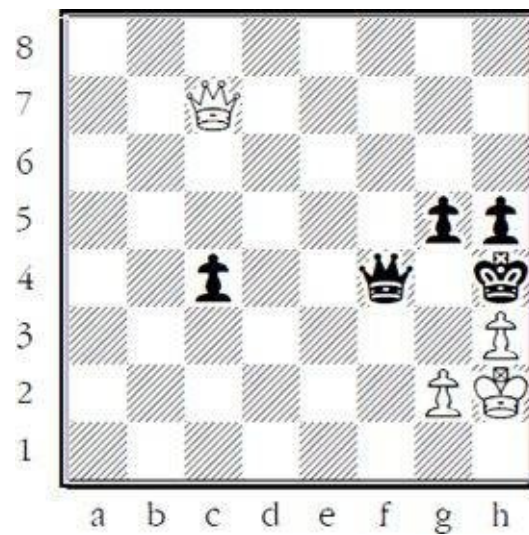
What's this? Has Black found a way to trade queens?

5.Kh2



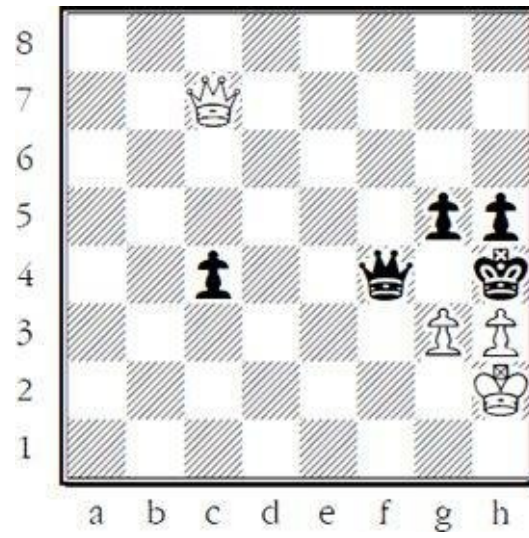
Sadly (happily?) this was White's only move.

5...Qf4+



There go the queens, Black thinks.

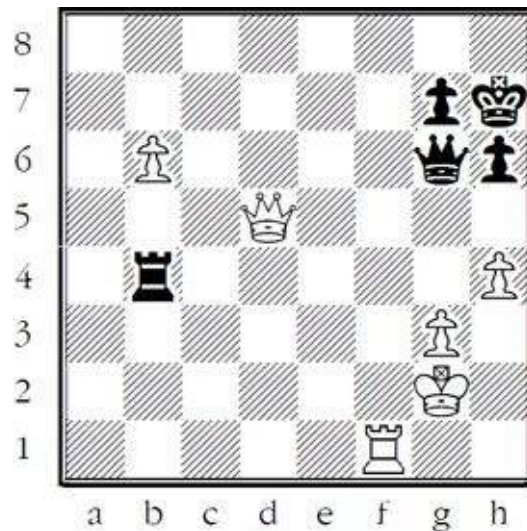
6.g3+!



Surprise, surprise: it's mate next move. (1-0)

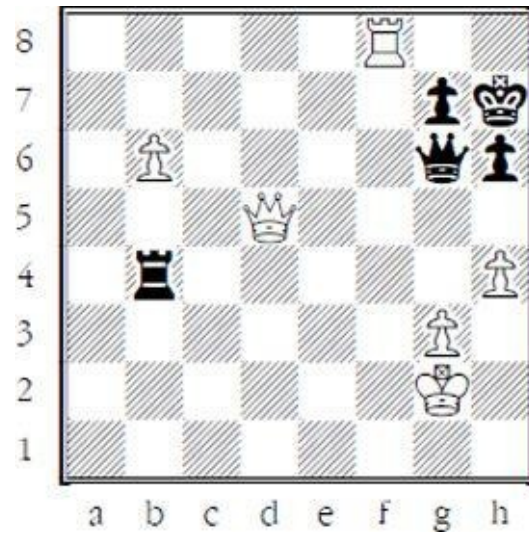
(21) Keres vs. Stahlberg, 1939

White is up a pawn



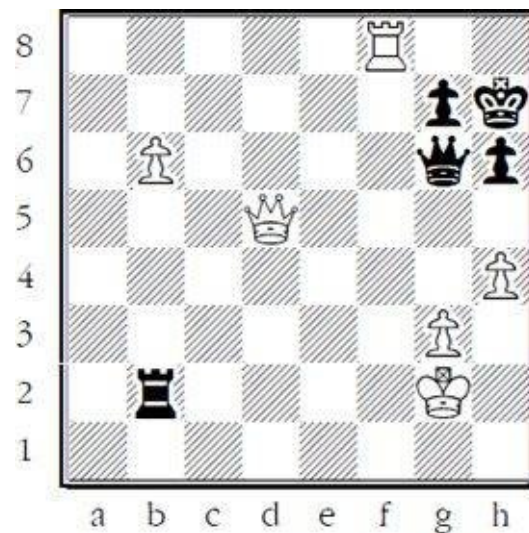
Whenever there are queens and rooks floating about, the endgame is likely to be mined with danger, since each side has a ready mating force, applicable in various ways. Here, neither king is entirely safe, though White's extra pawn is not irrelevant. And White also has the move, with the possibility of a sudden deadly intrusion. Nevertheless, there are a few precise shots to find, and Keres finds them.

1.Rf8



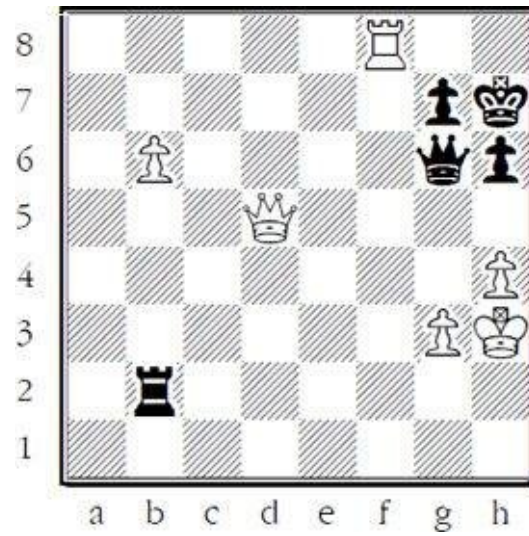
With his own king exposed, White takes a chance, threatening mate at g8.

1...Rb2+



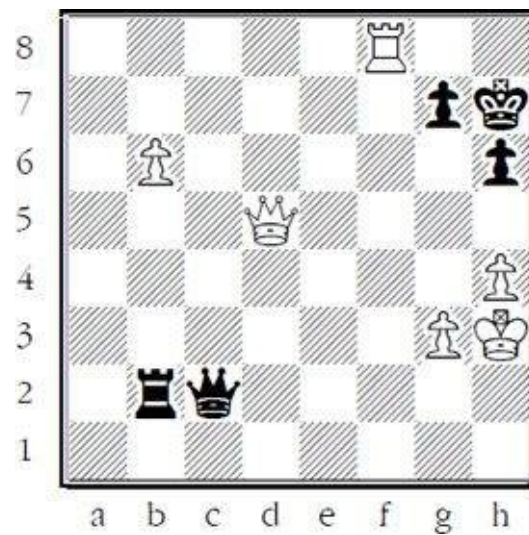
White must be careful. A bad move loses the pawn or even allows mate. That could be worse.

2.Kh3!



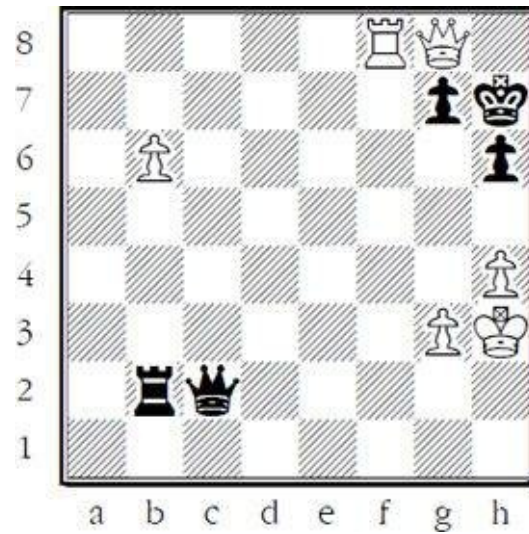
With White's queen powerfully centralized, h3 is safe enough for White's king.

2...Qc2



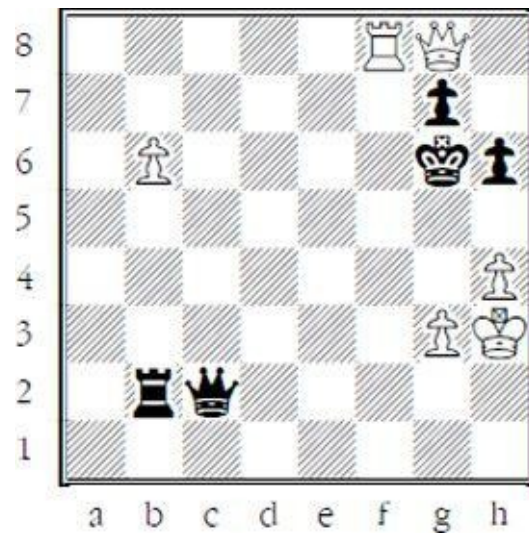
This entry clears g6 for use and retains some attacking options.

3.Qg8+



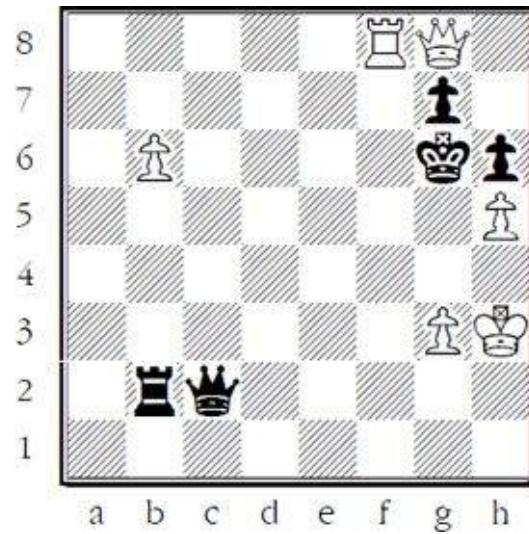
In such endings, usually the dominant queen is the one more centralized at the start.

3...Kg6



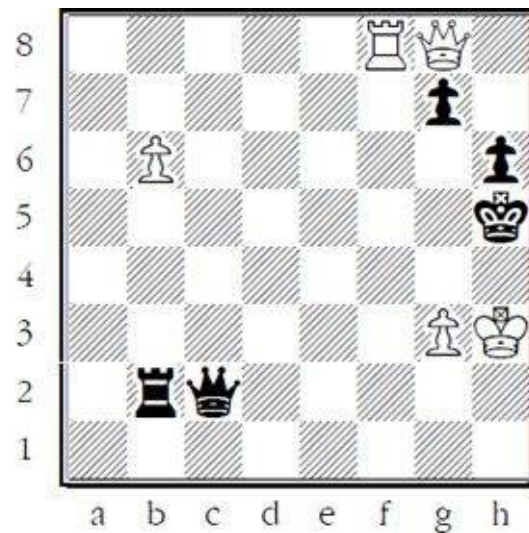
On 4.Qe6+ Black can go back in the cubby hole at h7.

4.h5+!



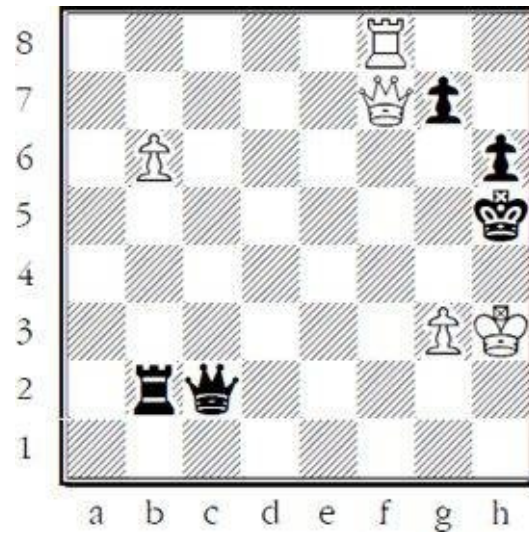
This sacrificial offering prevents the previous possibility, luring Black into the lion's den.

4...Kxh5



Worse was 4...Kg5 5.Qd5+ (yet another centralization).

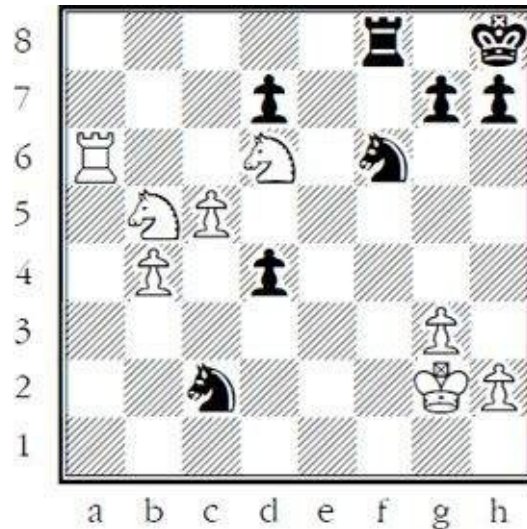
5.Qf7+



If 5...Kg5, then 6.Qxg7+ soon mates; and if 5...Qg6, then 6.g4+ Kg5 7.Qf4 mate.
(1-0)

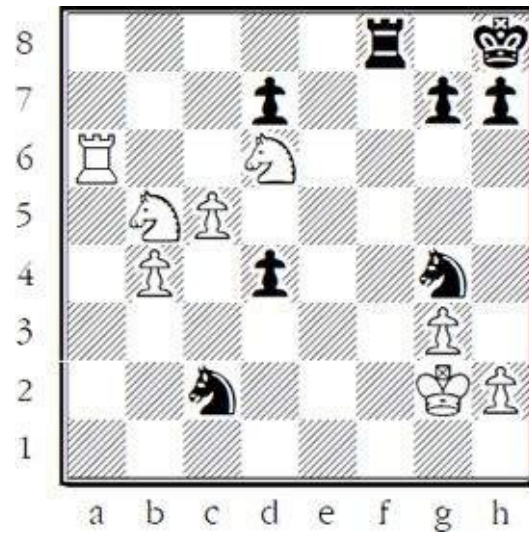
(22) Botvinnik vs. Bronstein, 1951

Black is even



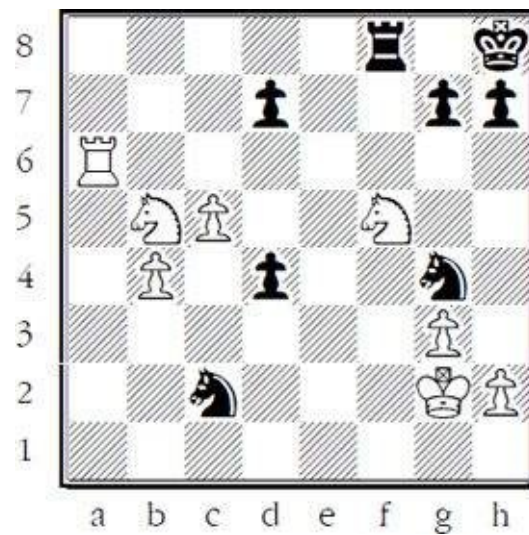
In this even endgame, things are not as even as they seem on the surface. Notice that White's main assault force is on the queenside, whereas Black's pieces are better equipped to handle sorties on the kingside. Moreover, while Black must be on the alert for back rank threats, White's king has that and other concerns to worry about. Black also has the move, and all of that is apparently all that Bronstein needs.

1...Ng4!



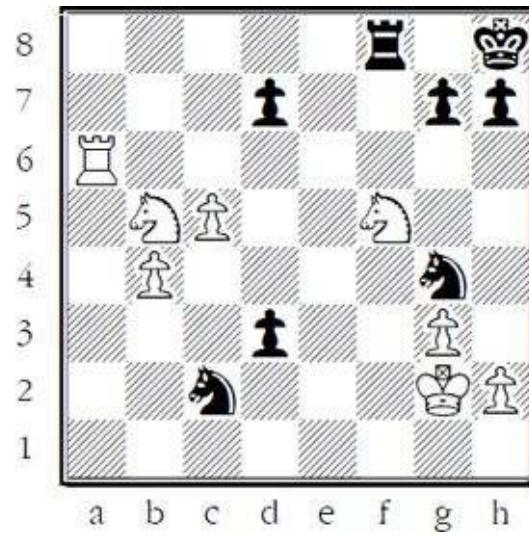
This opens the f-file and looks serious.

2.Nf5



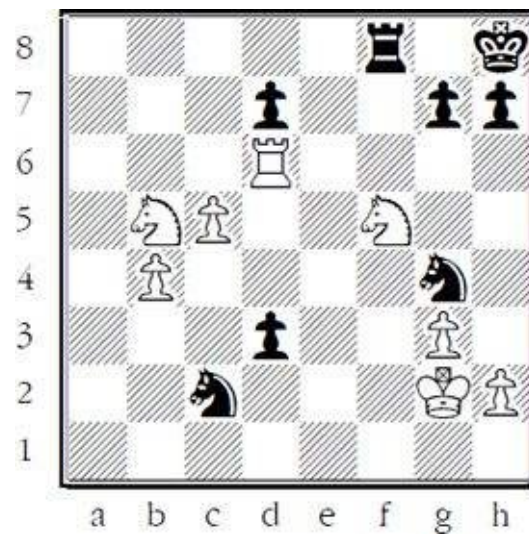
White gets tactical. If Black takes the knight, he gets mated.

2...d3!



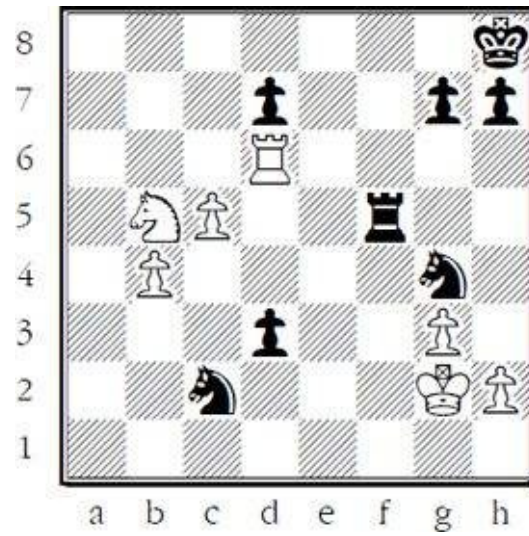
The pawn was a target. Now it's a threat.

3.Rd6



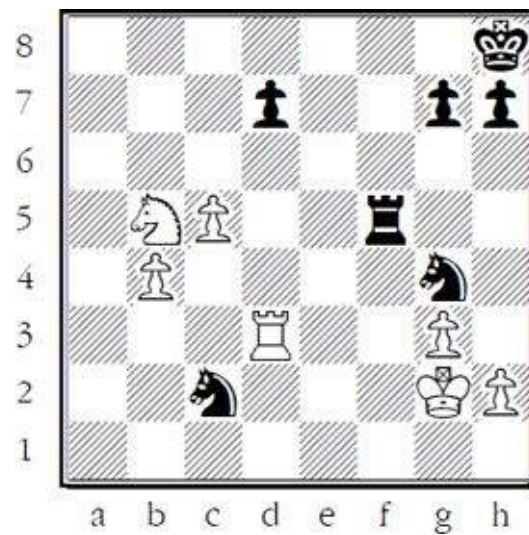
This stops the pawn, but it leaves the f5-knight hanging.

3...Rxf5



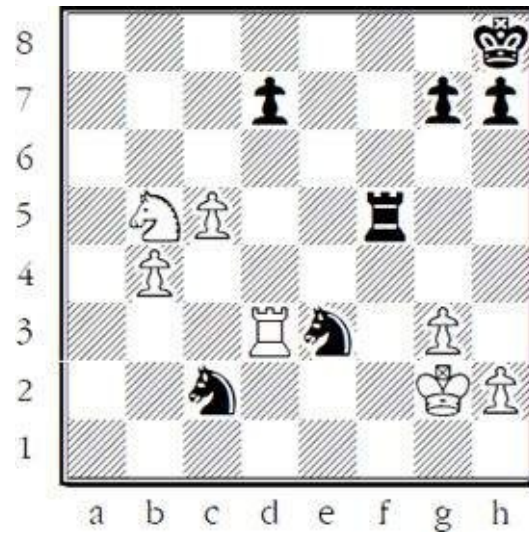
Black takes the knight and retains several threats.

4.Rxd3



White wins the pawn but loses the game.

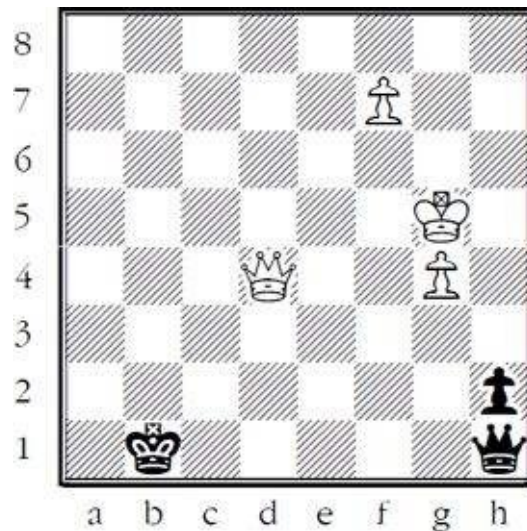
4...Nge3+



White can sac his rook, but after that it's mate in two. Yes, Black's other knight could also have checked at e3. **(0-1)**

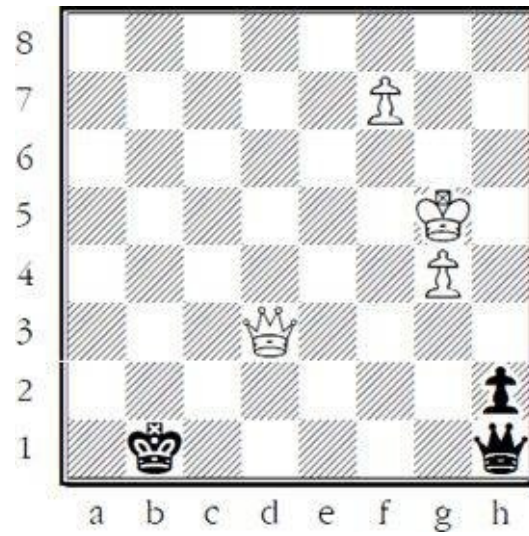
(23) Smyslov vs. Keres, 1953

White is up a pawn



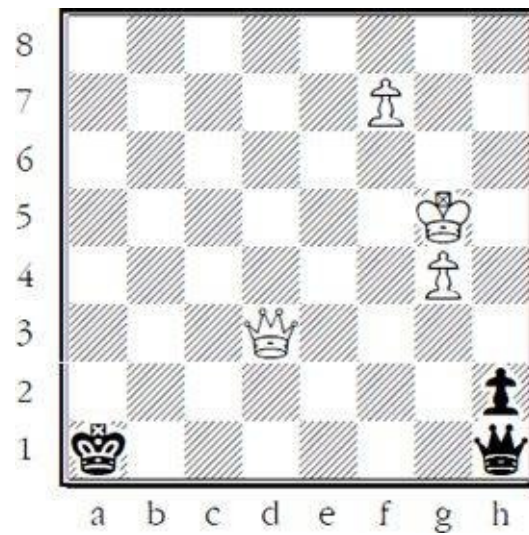
In this queen ending, the leitmotif has been the pawn race, with the f-pawn trying to get a step on the h-pawn. The other key feature is that White's centralized queen has increased mobility while the possibilities for Black's queen are decreased. To be sure, with each side having a queen, serious tactics may suddenly emerge. Imagine the possibilities if two queens, one for each player, are suddenly added. Hey, that's what happens.

1.Qd3+



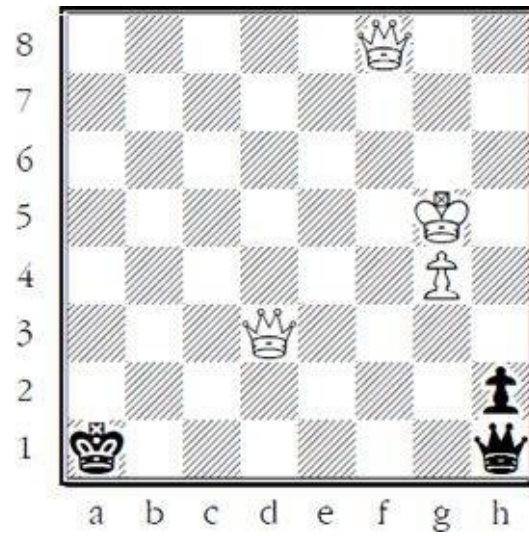
White uses the tempo to guard certain squares, such as f1, denying the black queen's access.

1...Ka1



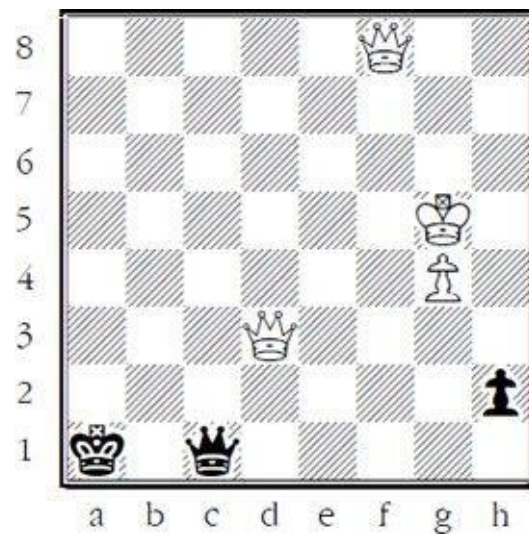
Black gets out of check. Nobody seems quite safe.

2.f8Q



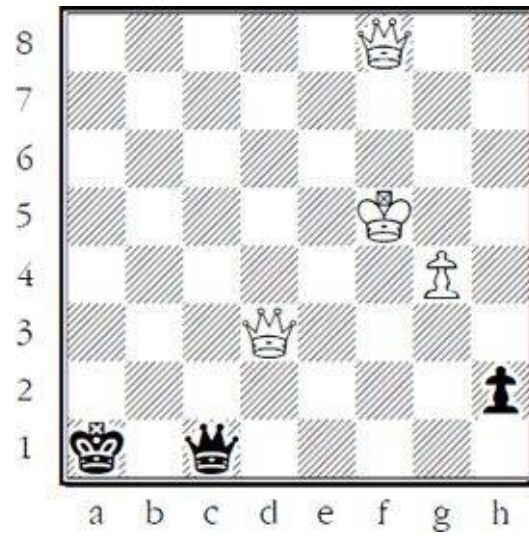
White makes a new queen and is menacing various checks.

2...Qc1+



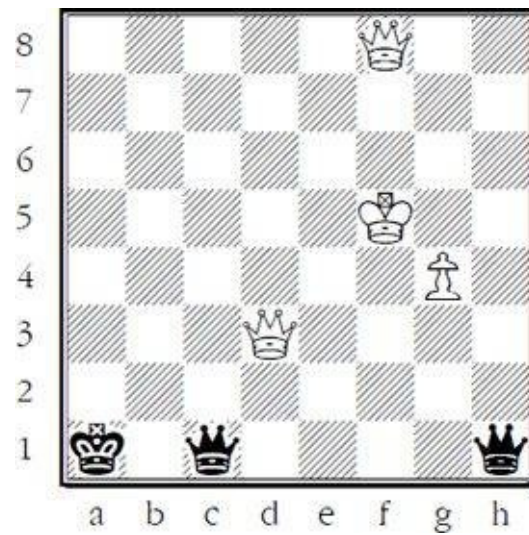
Black clears h1 with a check. He also wants to make a new queen.

3.Kf5



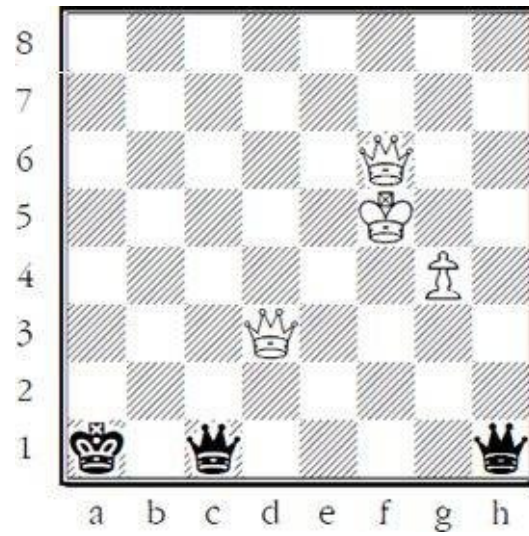
The checks come to an end, thanks to the white queen being at d3, near the center.

3...h1Q



Now Black has a second queen, too, but both of his queens are on the perimeter.

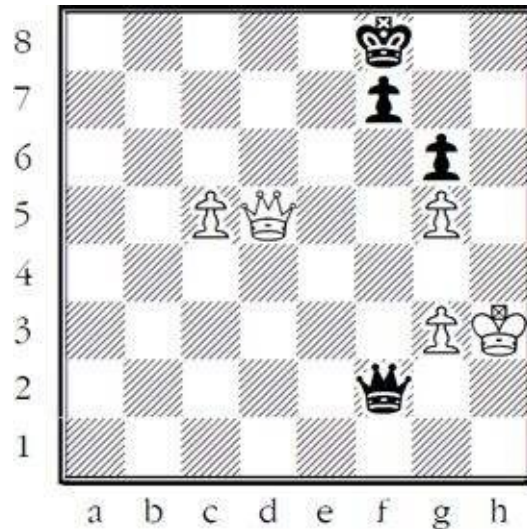
4.Qf6+



This check has no good answer. If 4...Qb2, then 5.Qa3+ forces mate. And if 4...Ka2, then 5.Qa6+ Kb2 6.Qaa3 is mate. **(1-0)**

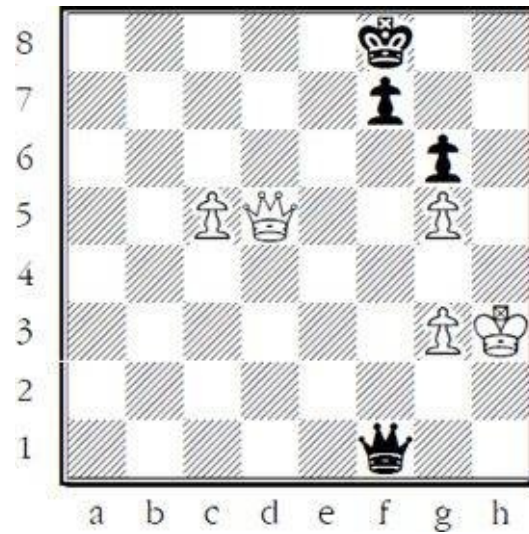
(24) Borisenko vs. Simagin, 1955

Black is down a pawn



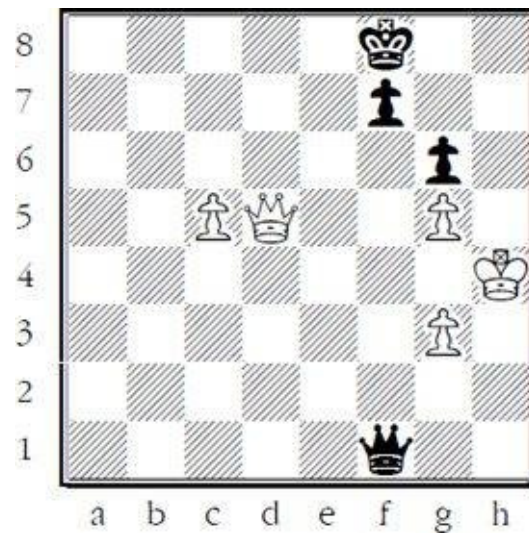
Here we have another queen ending. White has an extra pawn, passed and potentially dangerous. Black has chances to draw by giving perpetual check, though White's centralized queen cuts into those opportunities. Meanwhile, by being so dominantly placed at d5, the white queen has great attacking, blocking, and escorting promise. Black's hope is that White lets his guard down. In the end, he does.

1...Qf1+



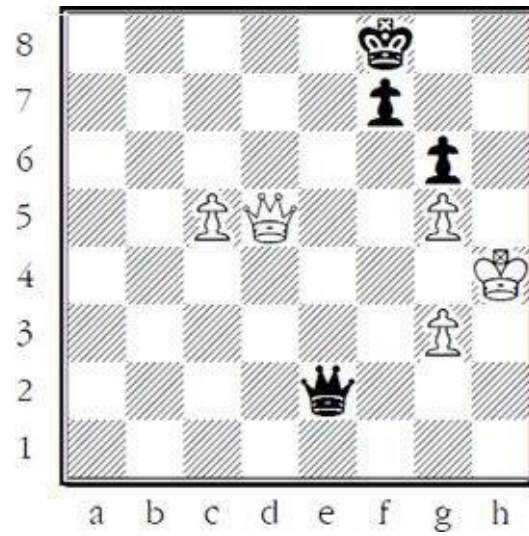
Black starts off with a check, hoping for 2.Qg2, allowing 2...Qf5+, stealing the c-pawn.

2.Kh4



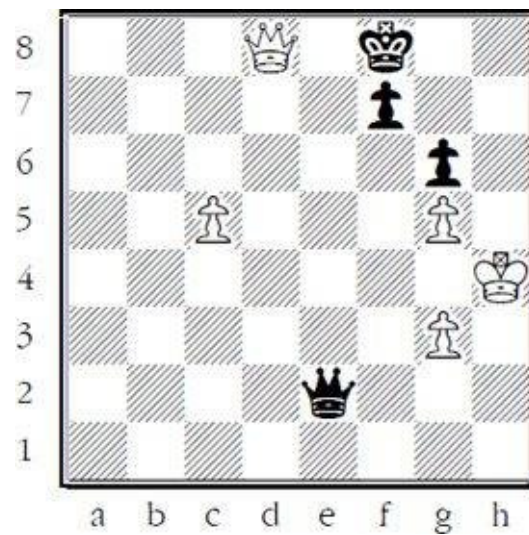
Suddenly, Black is out of safe checks, thanks to White's centralized queen.

2...Qe2!



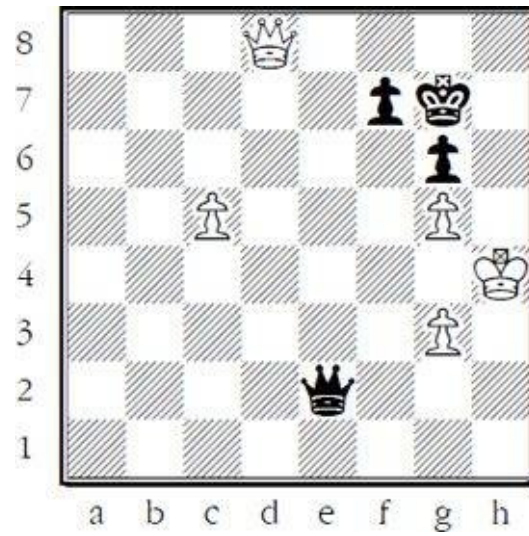
It's not a check, but the threat is clear: mate at h5.

3.Qd8+



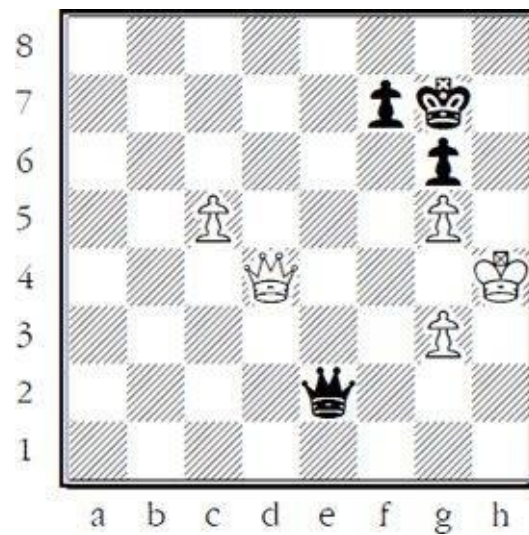
White forces Black's hand.

3...Kg7



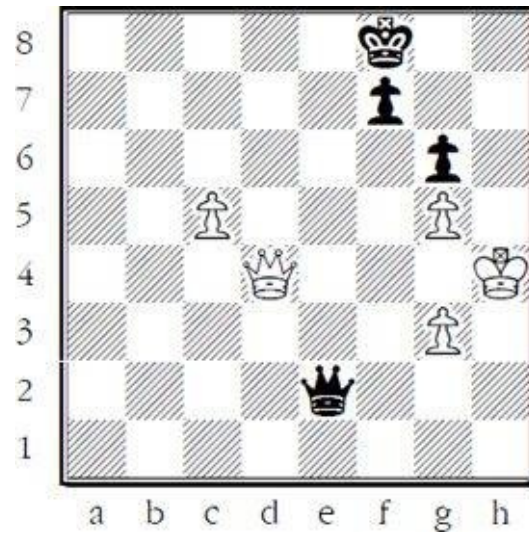
This was Black's only king move.

4.Qd4+



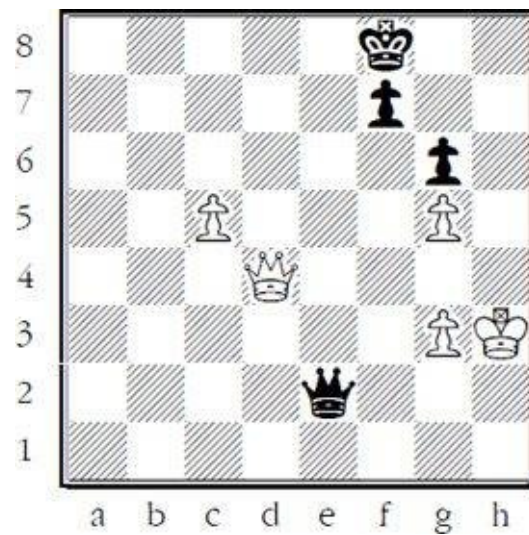
Once again, White keeps his queen centralized.

4...Kf8



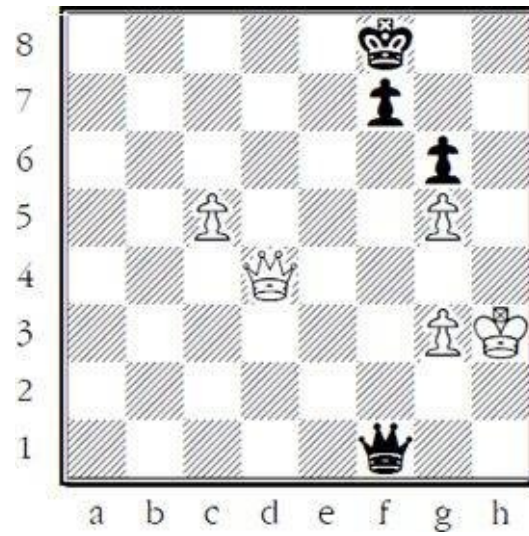
Black offers White a chance to repeat the position.

5.Kh3



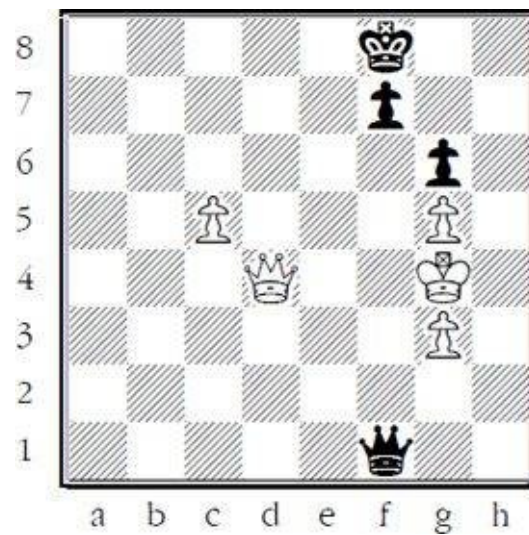
This stops the mate threat at h5.

5...Qf1+



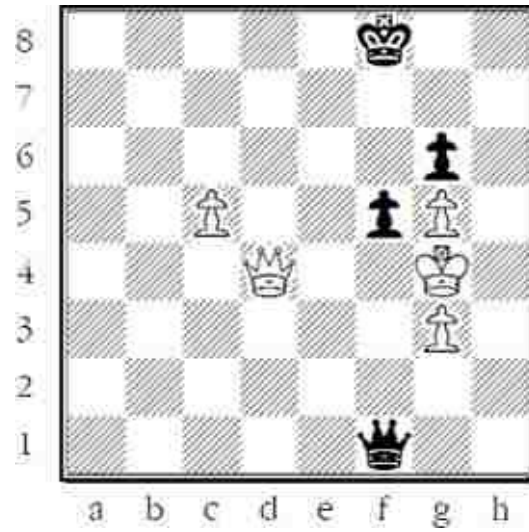
White has three king moves. Only one of them loses.

6.Kg4?



White found the losing king move. Now he's in for a shocker.

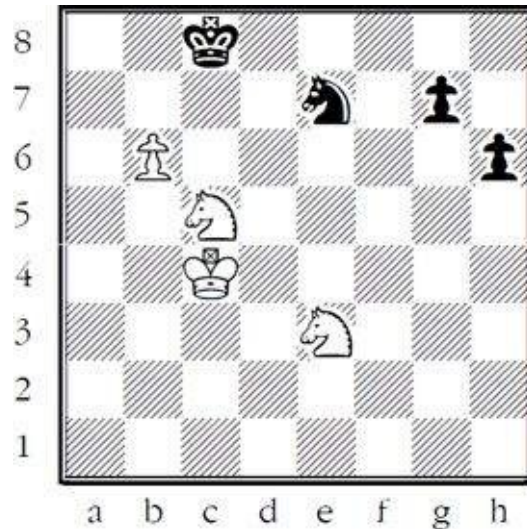
6...f5+!



If 7.Kh4, then 7...Qh1 mate. And if 7.gxf6, then 7...Qf5+ 8.Kh4 Qh5 mate. **(0-1)**

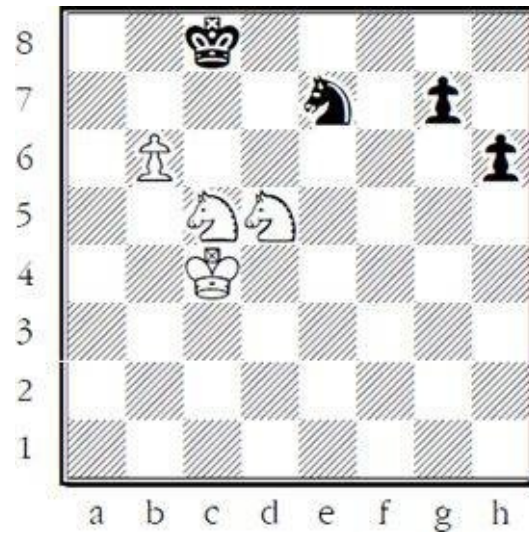
(25) Geller vs. Radulescu, 1956

White is up a knight for a pawn



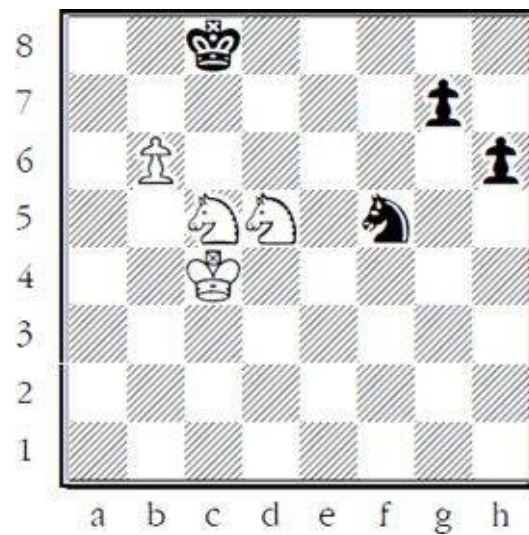
Undoubtedly, White has superiority here, but Black has a distant hope: that he could sac his knight for the b-pawn, throw away his kingside pawns, and leave White with the problem of trying to mate with two knights alone. Geller, one of the strongest players never to be world champion, knows all about the limitations of the two knights. He knows that stalemate is often the bitter end for the careless. But then, he was very careful.

1.Nd5!



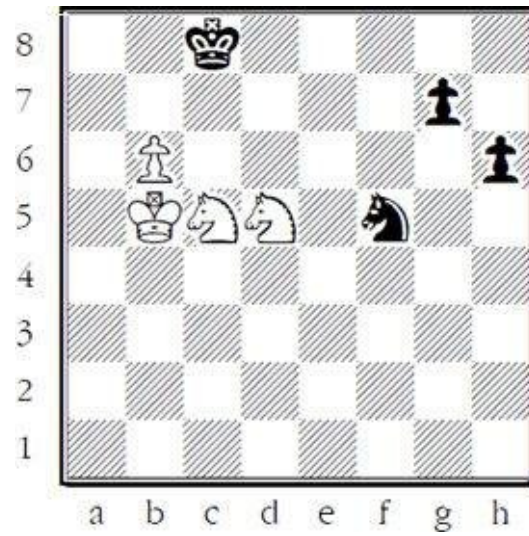
White uses the threat to trade knights to improve his position.

1...Nf5



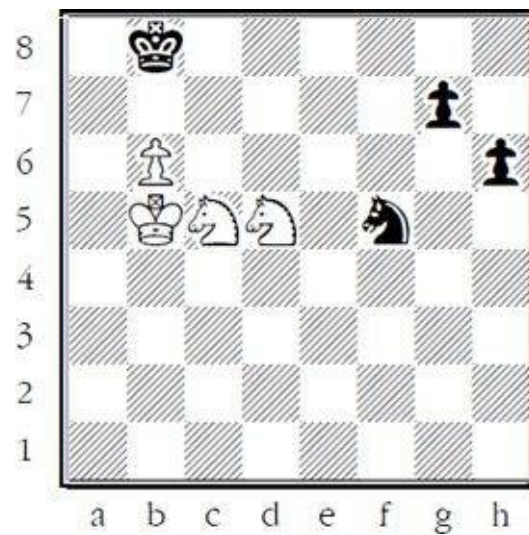
Black must keep his knight on the board if he is to realize his ambitions.

2.Kb5



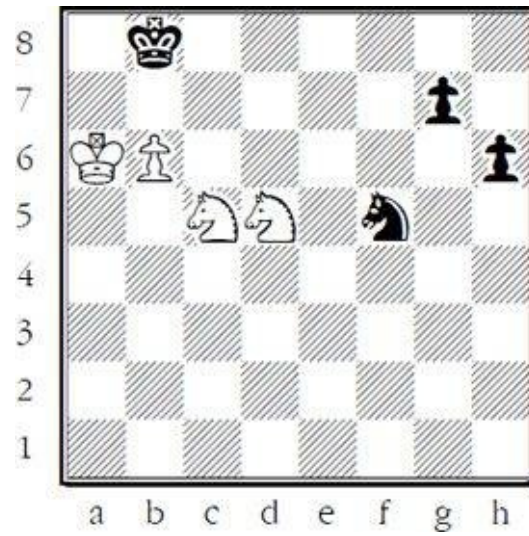
The White forces are massed for action.

2...Kb8



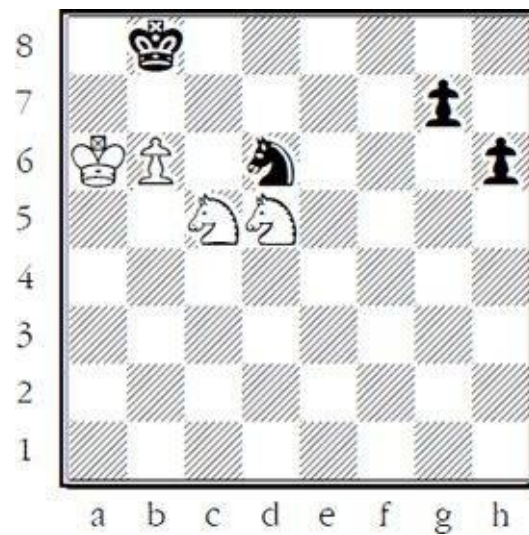
Black stays in contact with the b-pawn's promotion square.

3.Ka6



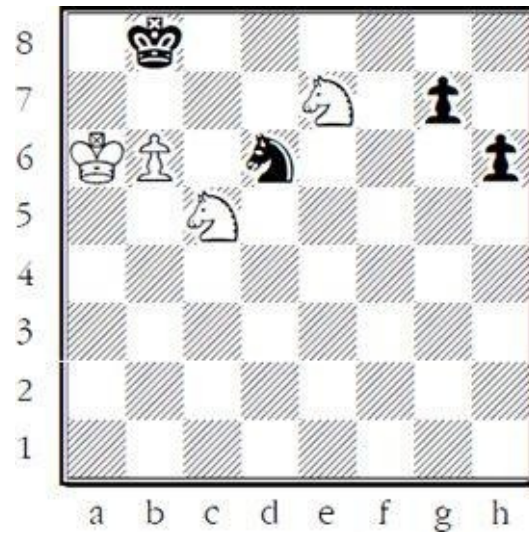
This overprotects b7 and frees the c5-knight.

3...Nd6



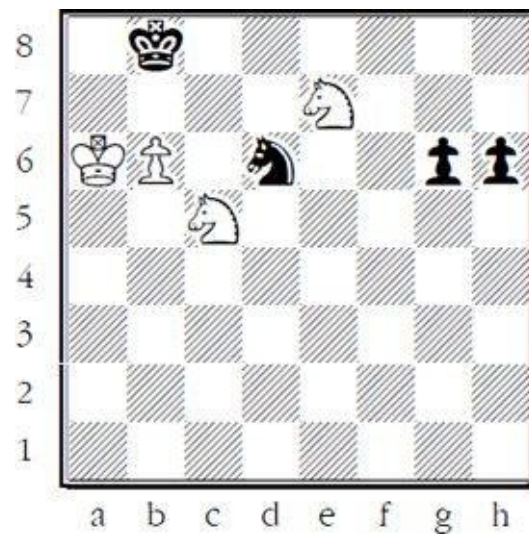
Now if White advances the pawn, Black sacs the knight for it.

4.Ne7!



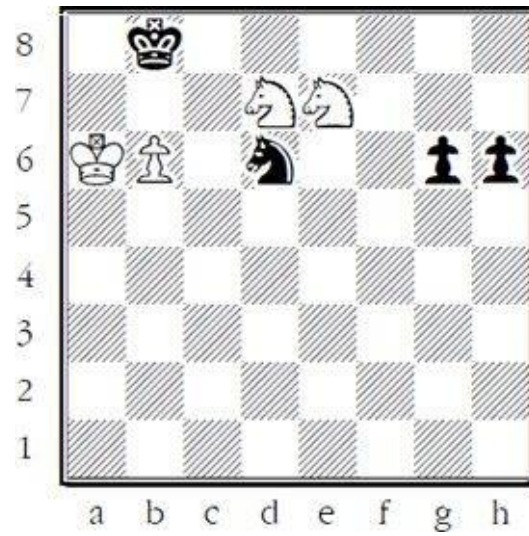
White guards c8, trapping in the black king.

4...g6



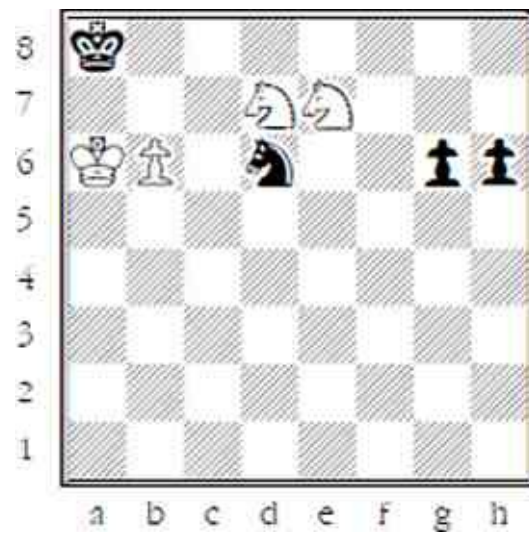
Black doesn't care about these pawns, if it lures away the e7-knight.

5.Nd7+



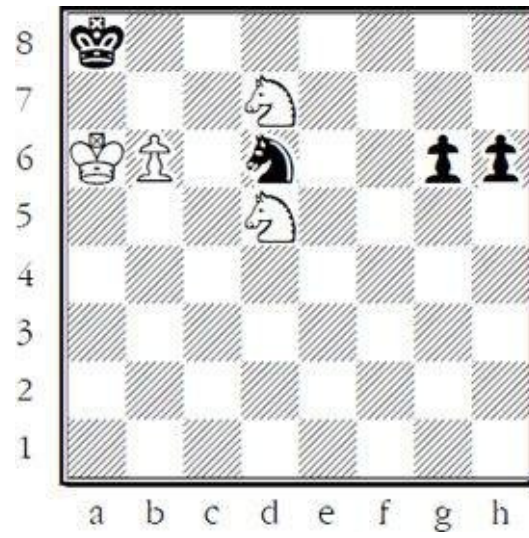
Black's king is driven into the a8 hole.

5...Ka8



One more check, assuming White can deliver it, and it's all over.

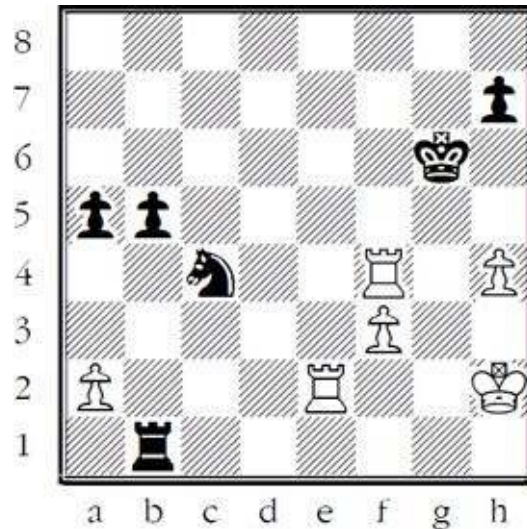
6.Nd5!



If Black now tries to stop the check at c7, the b-pawn mates instead. **(1–0)**

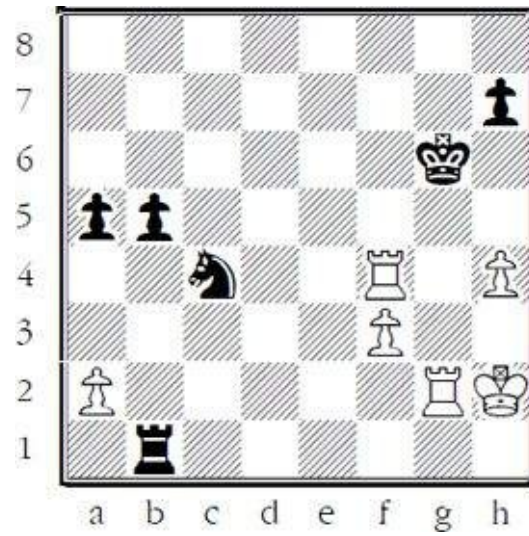
(26) Petrosian vs. Trifunovic, 1957

White is up the Exchange



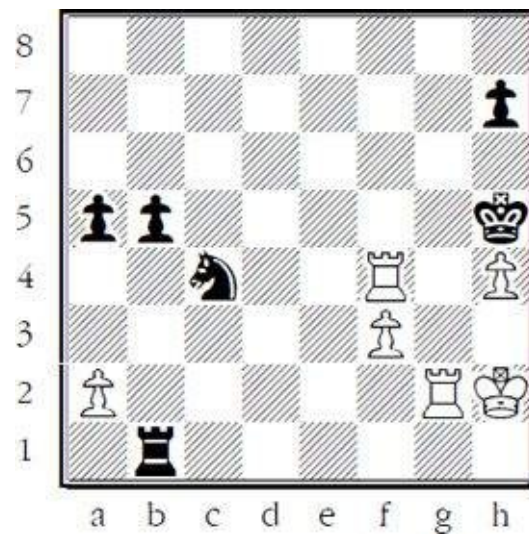
White is ahead by the Exchange, and with the move, his rooks can start wreaking some damage. Indeed, Black's king is not very safe. It comes down to finding how to use the rooks as a team. Black has some compensation on the queenside, but needs a lot more time than what's available. Against Petrosian, a master of piece coordinating wizardry, and a true time lord, Black doesn't have a prayer.

1.Rg2+



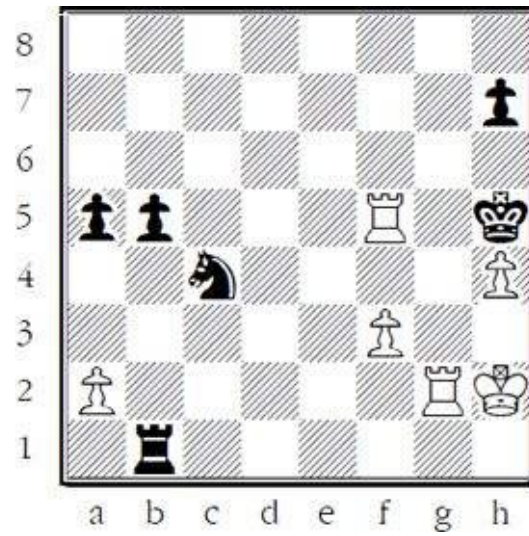
Black is compelled to move to the h-file.

1...Kh5



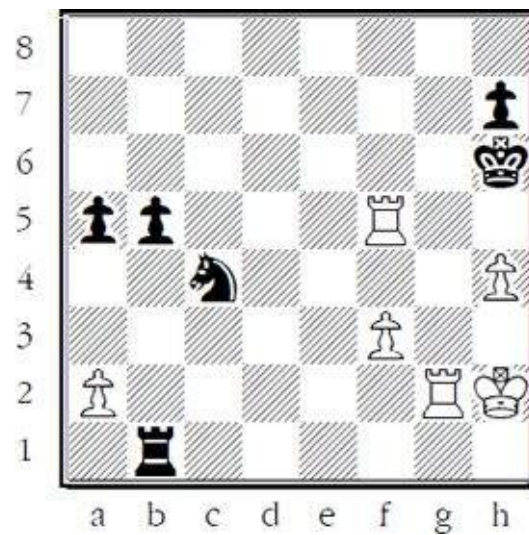
On 1...Kh6 White has 2.Rf6+, transposing into the game.

2.Rf5+



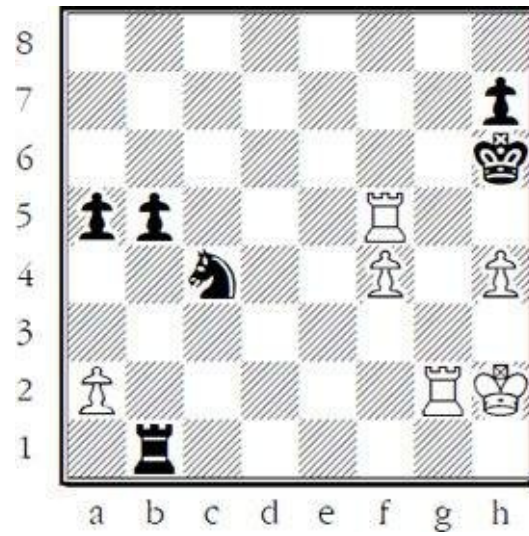
With 2...Kxh4 3.Rg4 mate, Black can go home early.

2...Kh6



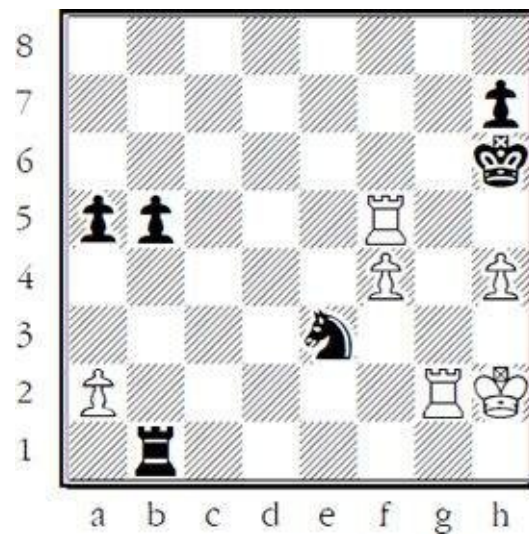
Right now, this is Black's best move.

3.f4



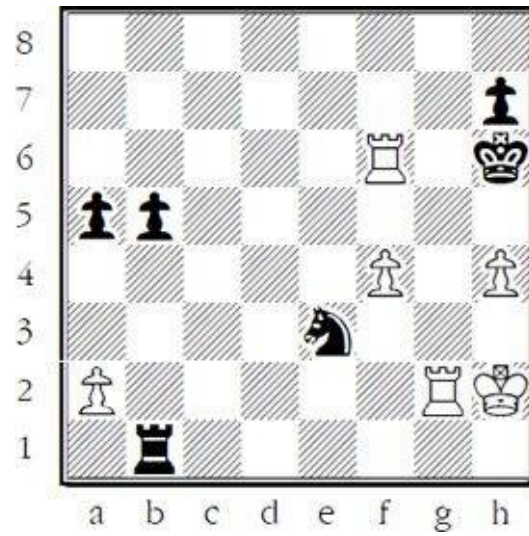
This move surely seals the deal. White is menacing mate.

3...Ne3



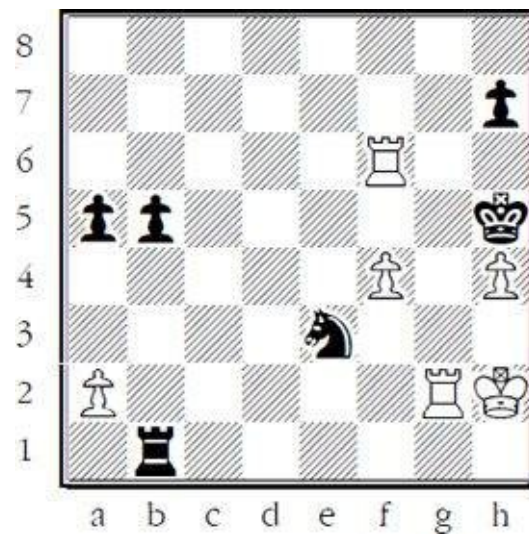
An inconsequential knight fork can't save matters.

5.Rf6+



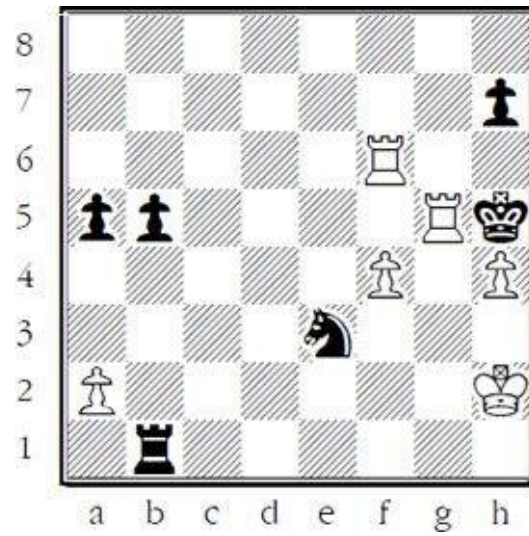
Black has but one move.

4...Kh5



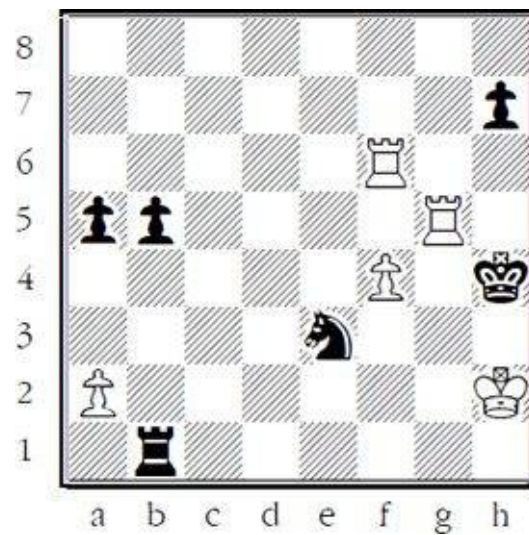
Black can do no better than to hope for White to make a mistake.

5.Rg5+



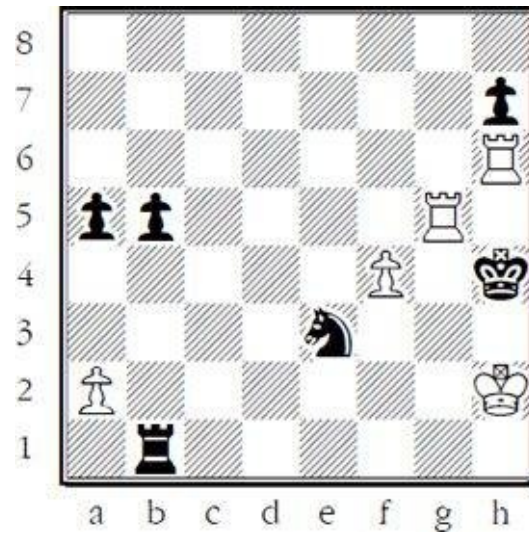
Take that, you defenseless king, you!

5...Kxh4



Once again, this is Black's only move.

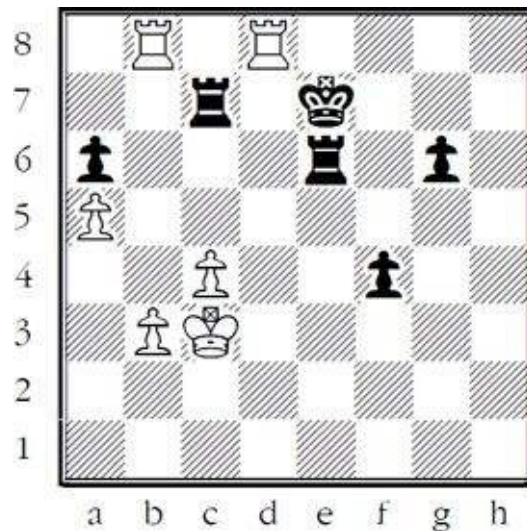
6.Rh6 mate



Now we see the advantage to having the pawn on f4. It guards the rook at g5.
(1-0)

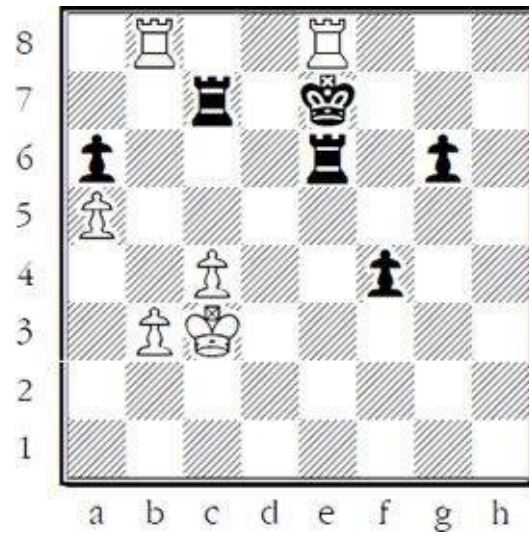
(27) Smyslov vs. Botvinnik, 1958

White is even



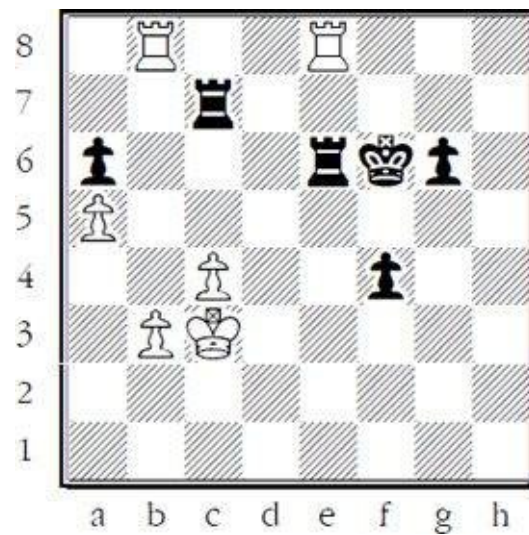
There's plenty of mating force available here, with each side having two rooks and a few pawns. Nevertheless, with the pawns so placed, it seems as if both kings have havens in which to hide. Moreover, White's 3-to-1 pawn advantage on the queenside seems to offset Black's connected pawns on the kingside. In the end, it comes down to a battle between the kings. To be sure, one of the kings is better suited for defense and, as it turns out, laying deadly snares.

1.Re8+



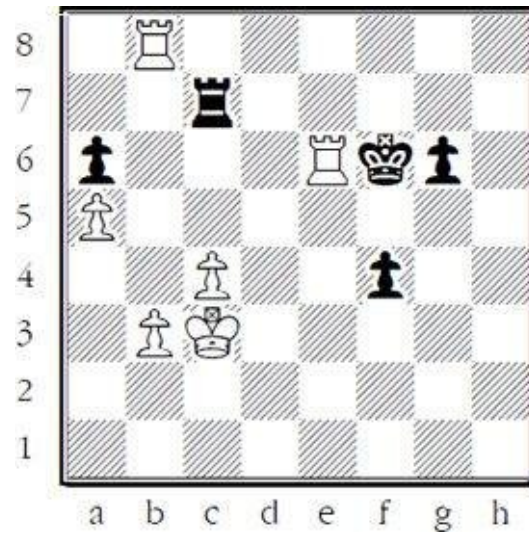
Now if 1...Kd7, then 2.Rbd8+ wins a rook.

1...Kf6



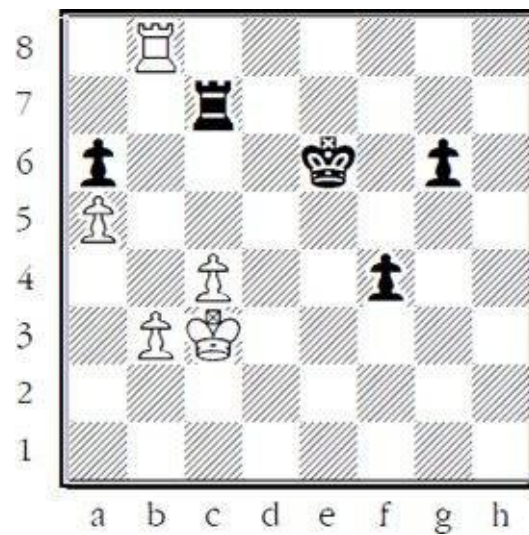
Black's king seems poised to help the pawns along.

2.Rxe6+



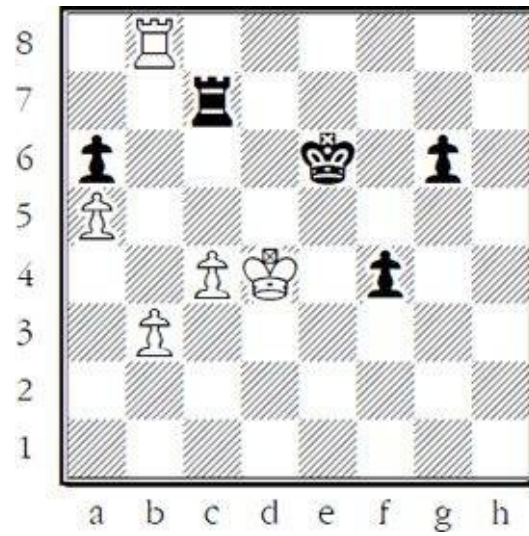
White gets rid of a pair of rooks.

2...Kxe6



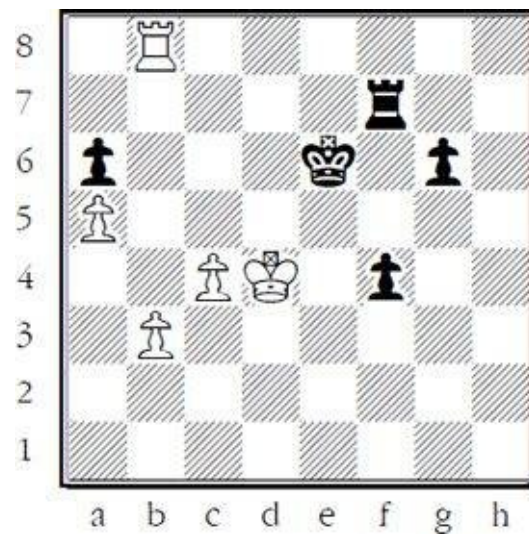
Obviously, Black takes back.

3.Kd4



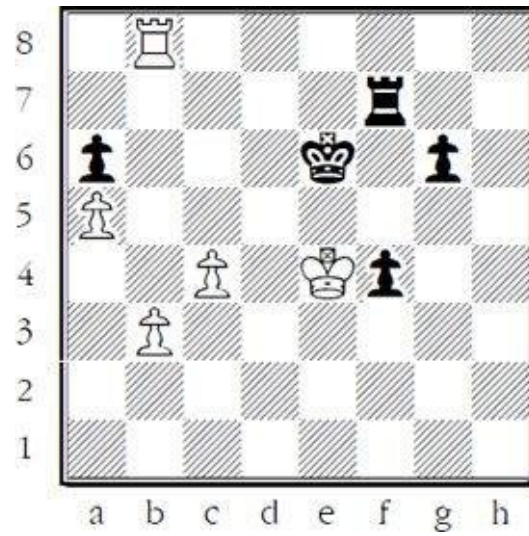
White is unsure of 3.Rb6+ Kf5, so he elects to centralize his king.

3...Rf7



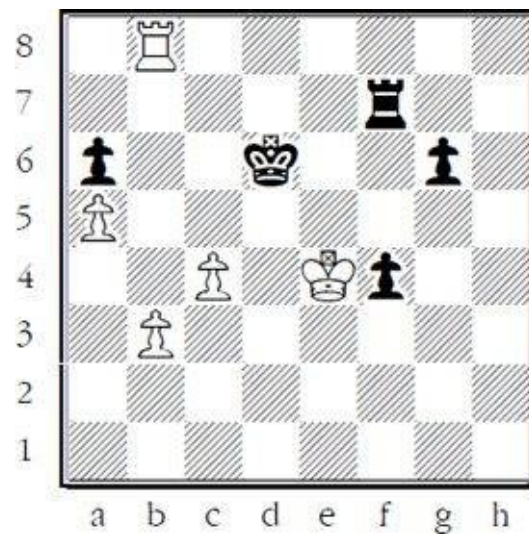
Black stations his rook behind the f-pawn to support its advance.

4.Ke4



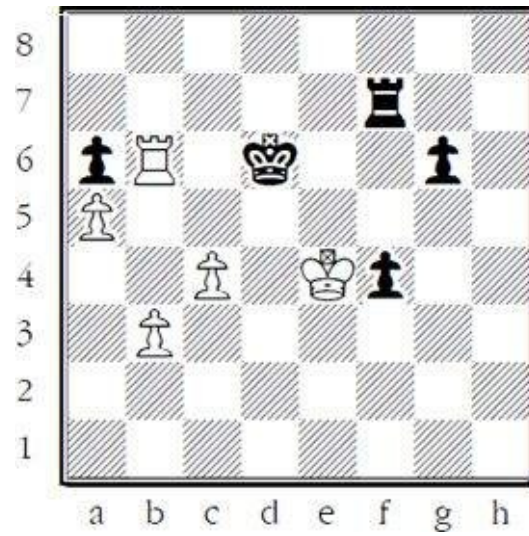
White's king arrives in time.

4...Kd6



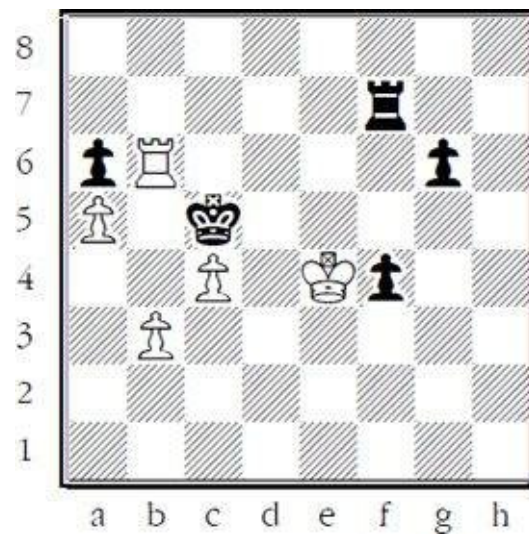
The advance 4...f3 would have failed to 5.Rb6+ Ke7 6.Rb7+.

5.Rb6+



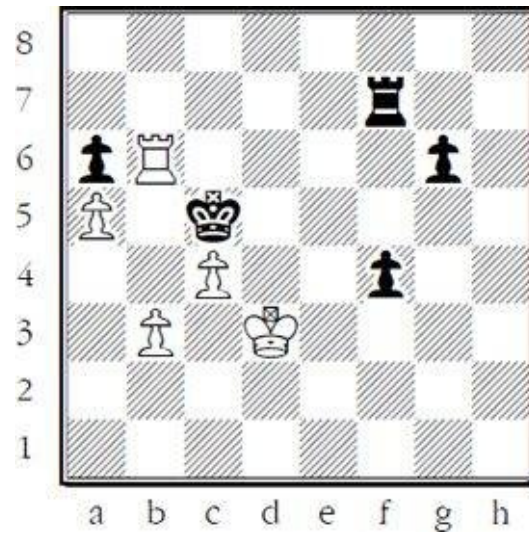
It seems as if White wins a pawn.

5...Kc5?



This loses, but 5...Kc7 6.Rxg6 wasn't fun either.

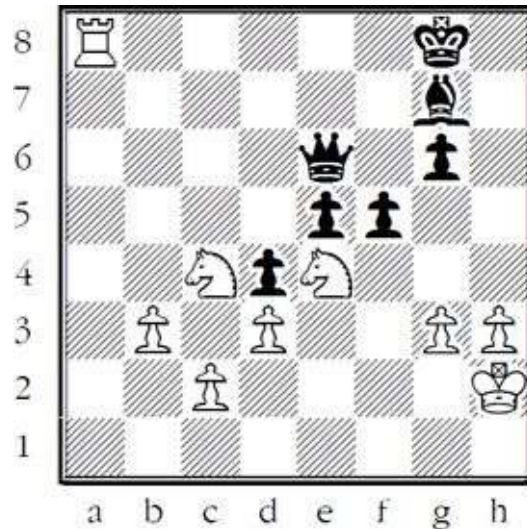
6.Kd3!



White catches Black in a mating net (b3-b4 mate coming up), which can't be averted. **(1-0)**

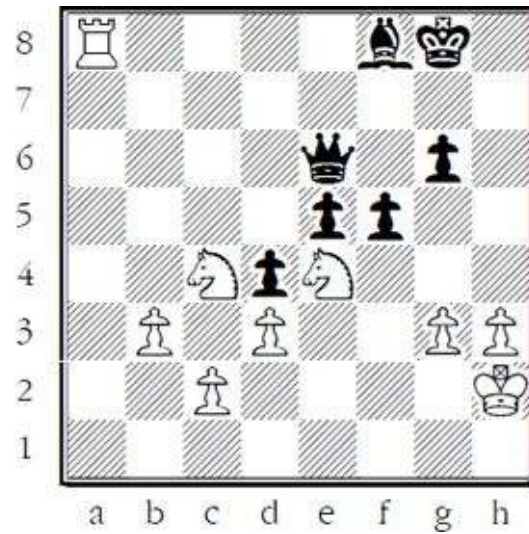
(28) Mednis vs. Fischer, 1958

Black has material equivalence



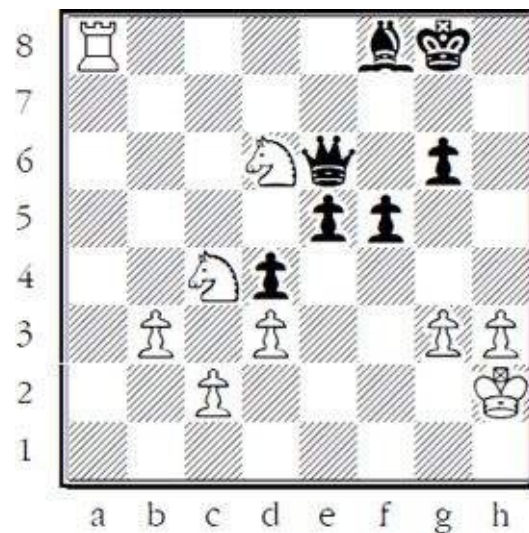
In this imbalanced position, with more or less equality, Black is in check. If White's pieces begin to coordinate, they may pose problems for Black. But the queen has all sorts of pick-off power, so White's pieces must work as a team. To be sure, the queen is often a deadly force in itself. When pieces not yet in unison get a little too bold, the queen's sudden striking ability is the most dangerous weapon on the board. Here, it proves decisive.

1...Bf8



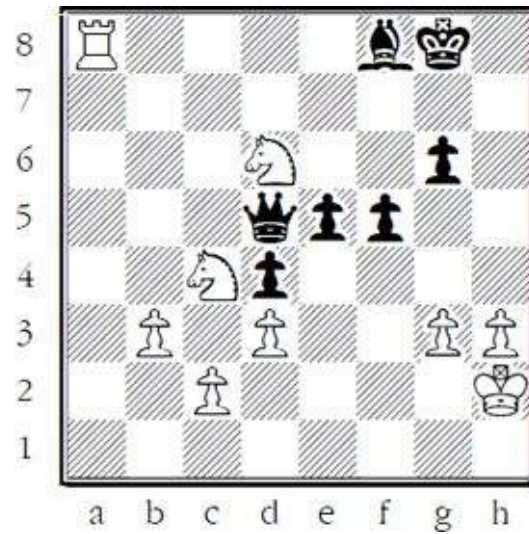
This is a little better than 1...Kh7 (or 2...Kf7) 2.Ng5+, forking king and queen.

2.Ned6



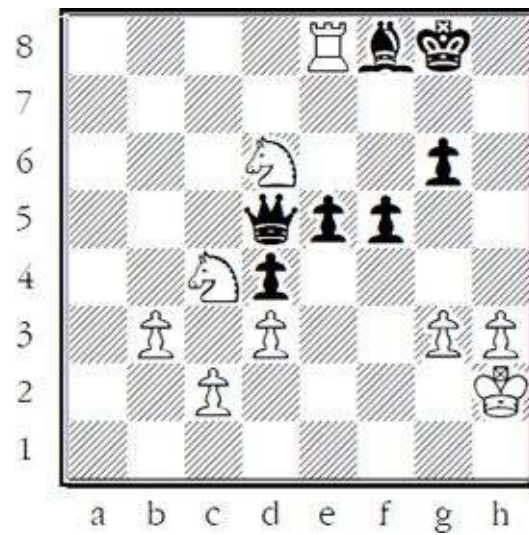
White saves the knight, making sure the other knight is employed.

2...Qd5



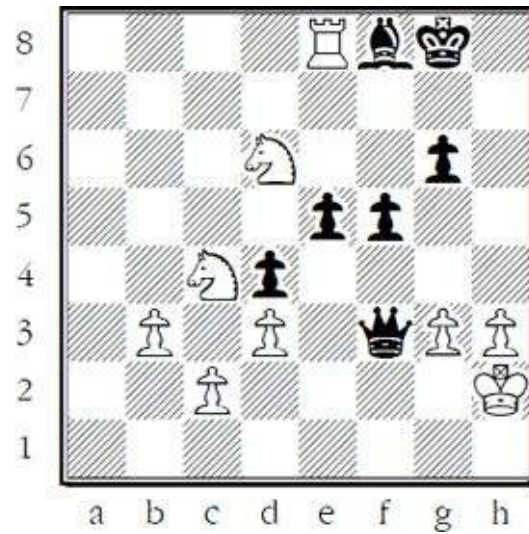
Black redeploys his queen, with a strong centralization. The queen also assails the rook.

3.Re8



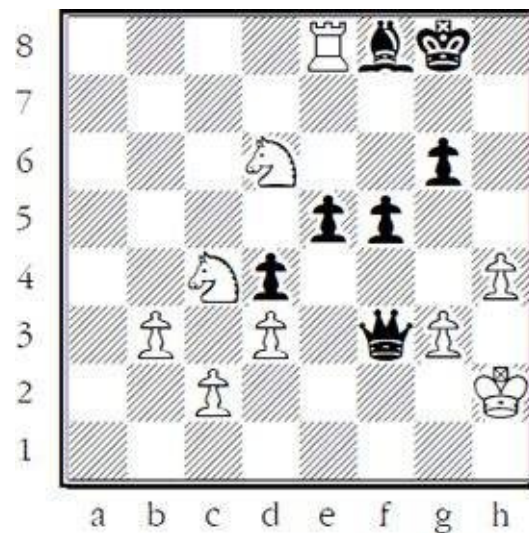
White takes aim at the e5-pawn, placing the rook behind it.

3...Qf3



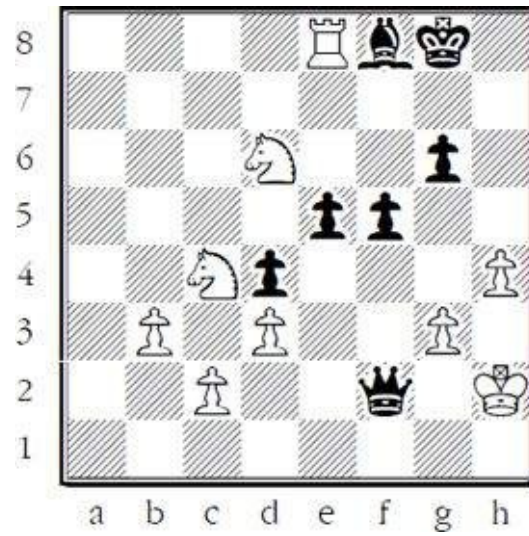
With this intrusion, Black ensures at worst a draw by perpetual threat.

4.h4



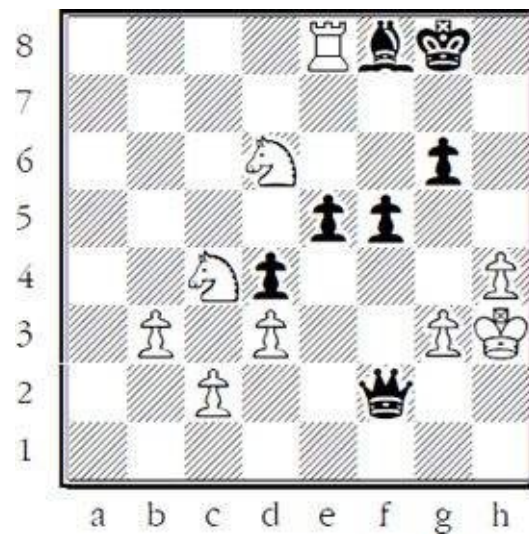
White hopes to escape, but 4.Nxe5 at least would have avoided what follows.

4...Qf2+



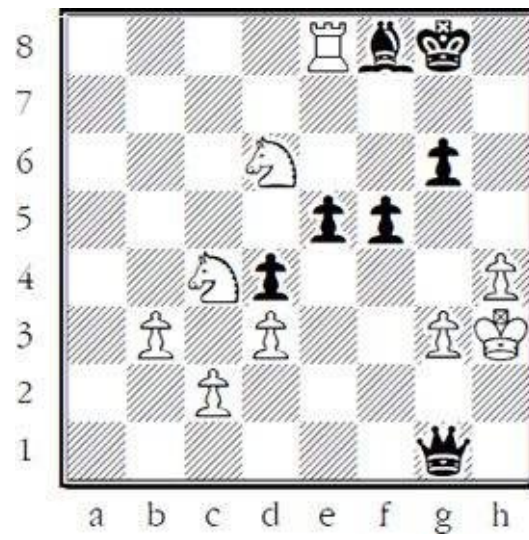
White's best move is now 5.Kh1, as bad as it is.

5.Kh3?



But this makes matters worse.

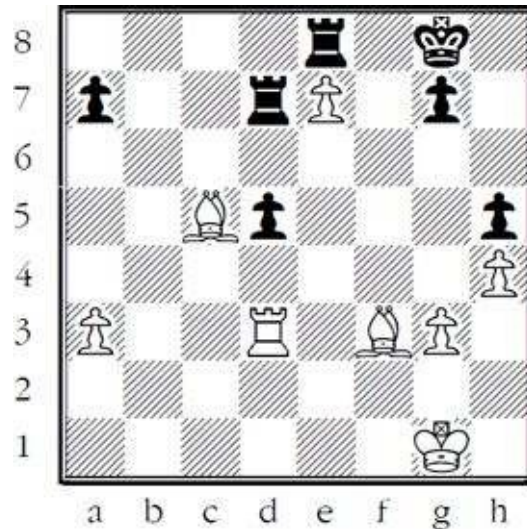
5...Qg1!



White cannot avoid mate. **(0-1)**

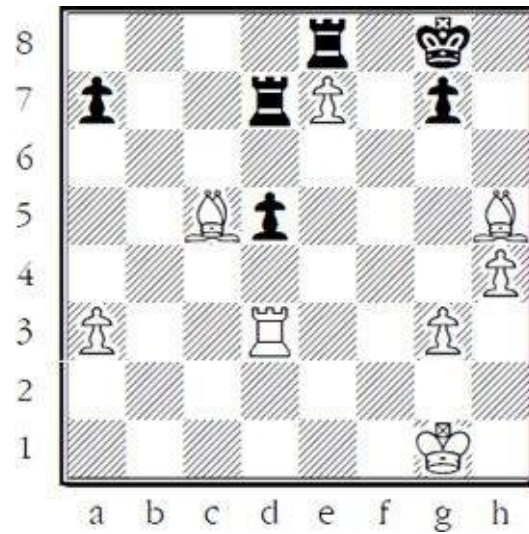
(29) Botvinnik vs. Dueckstein, 1958

White has two bishops for a rook



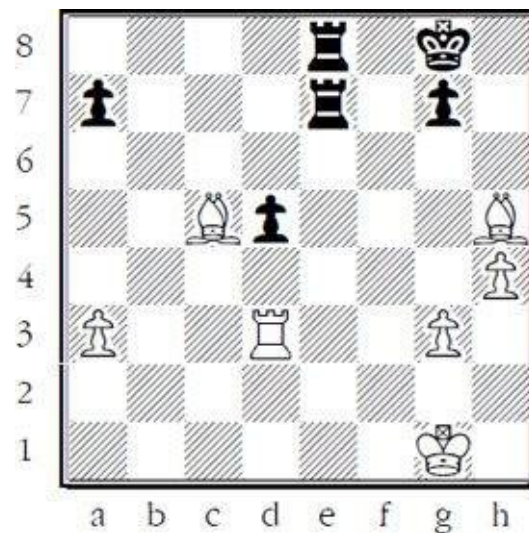
Here we start with a position worthy of resignation. Black, having two rooks, has continued the play, if we choose to call it that, impelled by inertia. Still, Botvinnik probably had something better to do with the rest of his day, as many of us may feel presently, and so the precise moves leading quickly to closure can only be appreciated. I guess it's possible that some day we could play the very same ones.

1.Bxh5



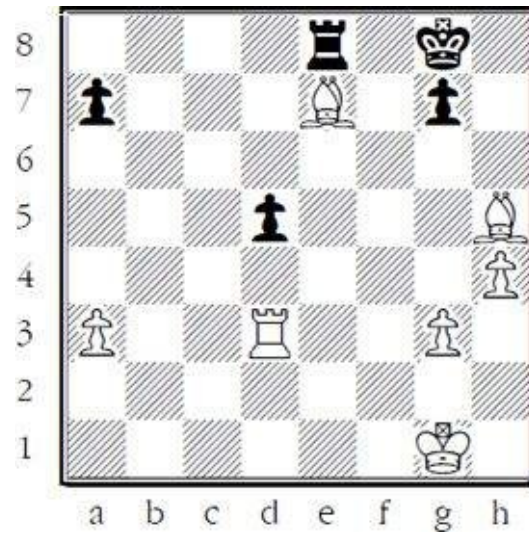
The advanced pawn and crossing bishops assure the win of material.

1...Rdx7



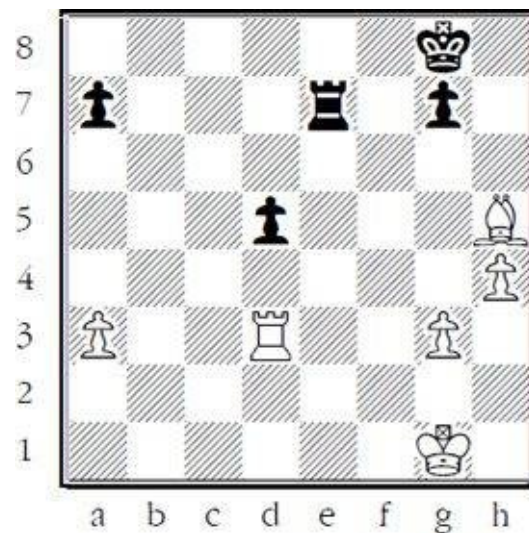
Black eliminates this dangerous pawn, but in the process surrenders an Exchange.

2.Bxe7



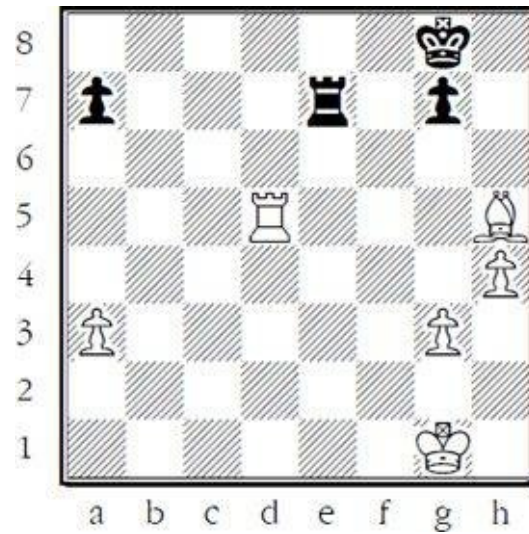
White had a choice which rook to take. He opts to keep his light-square bishop.

2...Rxe7



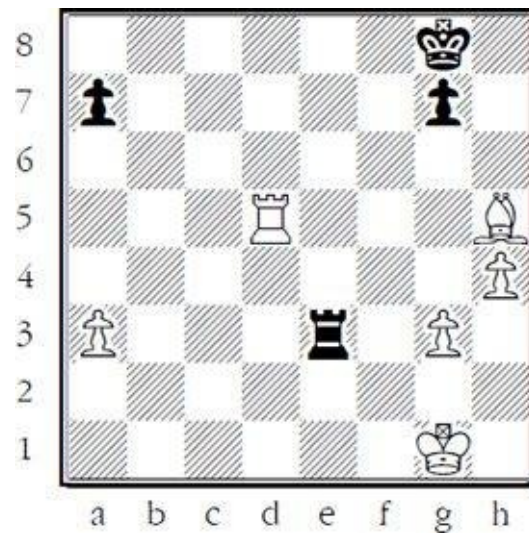
Naturally, Black takes back, leaving White a piece up.

3.Rxd5



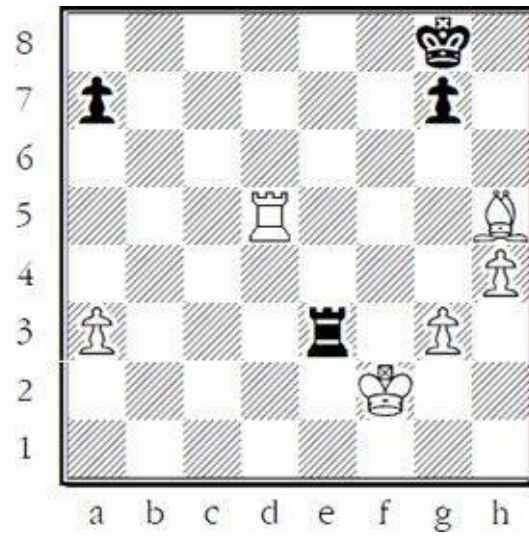
Black's d-pawn had no hope. Now it can go back in the box, ready for the next game.

3...Re3



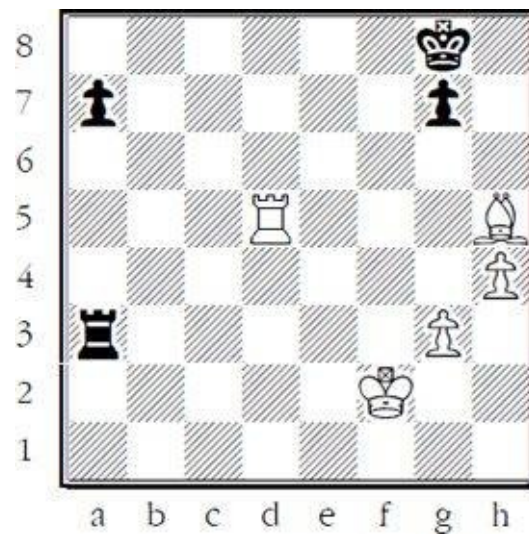
This double attack eyes two different pawns.

4.Kf2



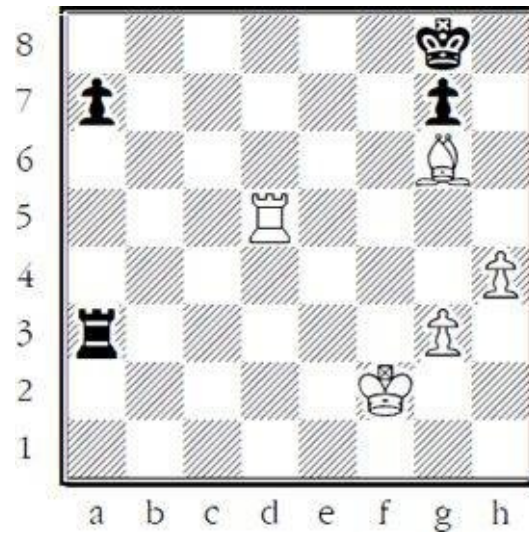
White keeps the pawn he values more and introduces his king.

4...Rxa3



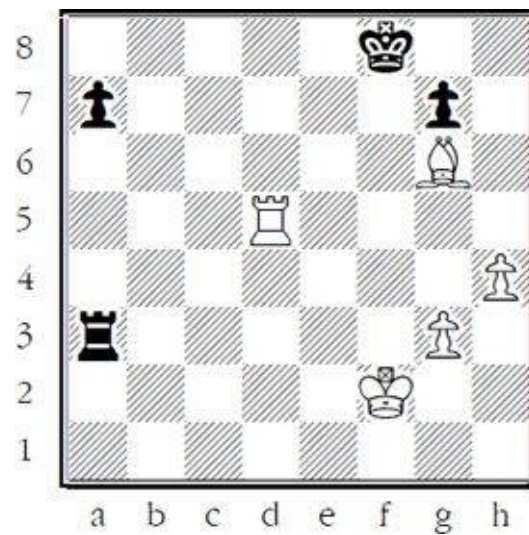
Black settles for capturing the a-pawn.

5.Bg6



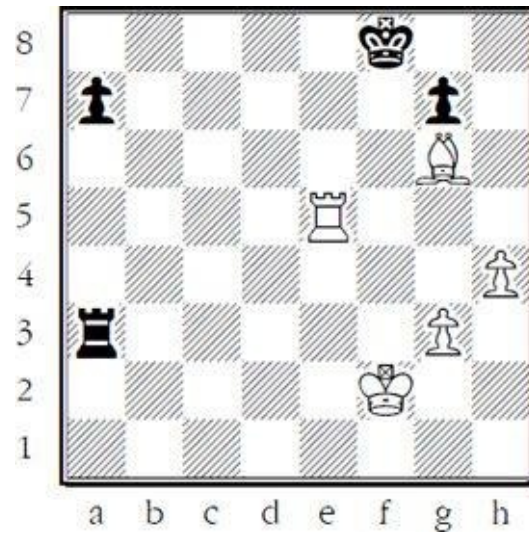
This move tightens the noose, threatening mate in the bargain.

5...Kf8



Black hopes to escape at e7.

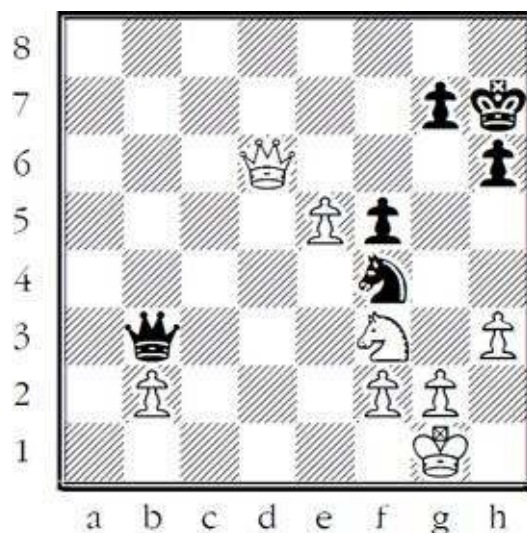
6.Re5!



Black is caught in a mating net. Perhaps even he was glad it had come to an end.
(1-0)

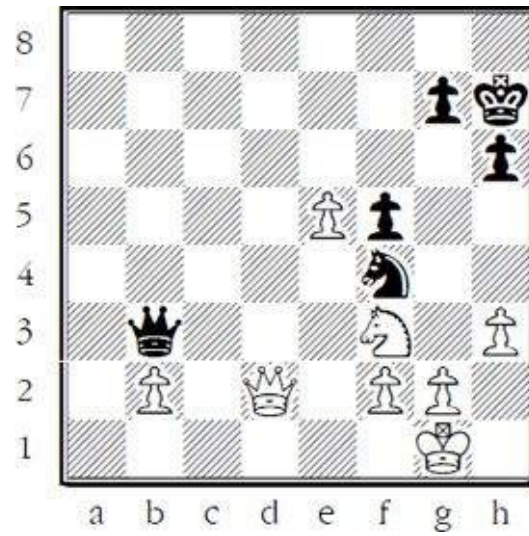
(30) Botvinnik vs. Raizman, 1958

White is up a pawn



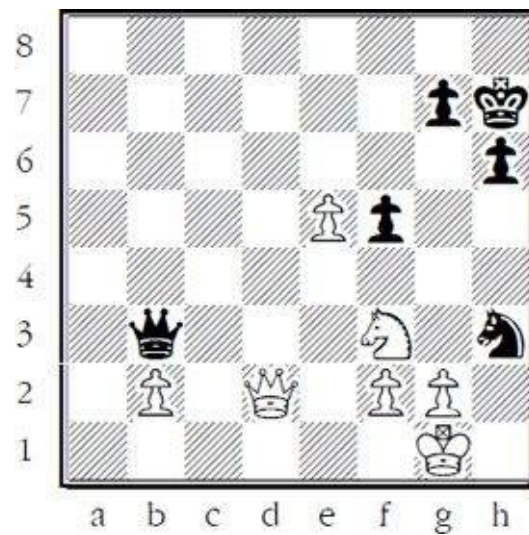
White is in the lead, but Black is not without counterplay. Right now, at the very least, the b-pawn is hanging. Black has a few other tricks up his sleeve, too, but White has his own defensive resources. It's amazing how sometimes the player on defense, even in an endgame, can suddenly change his clothes and become the player on attack.

1.Qd2



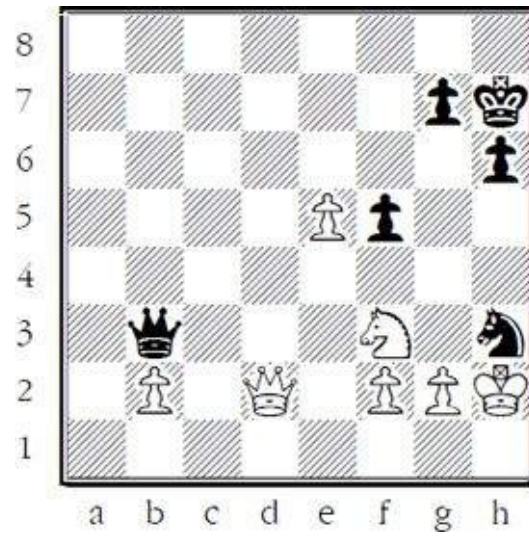
White defends the b-pawn and assails the black knight.

1...Nxh3+



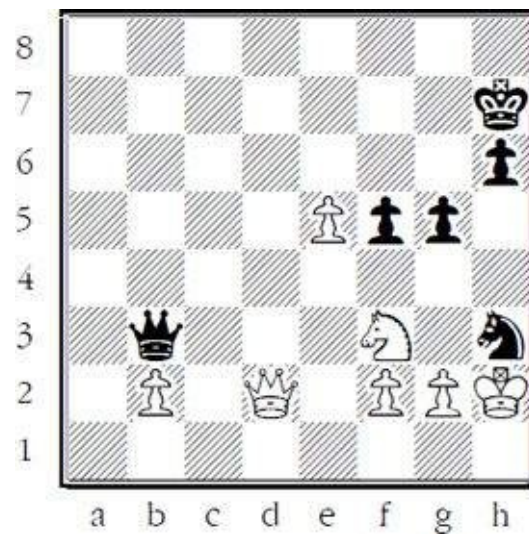
So this was Black's idea: to steal a pawn.

2.Kh2



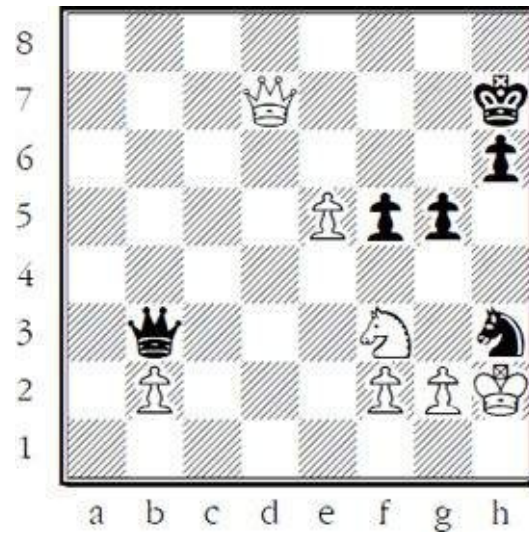
On 2.gxh3 Black had 2...Qxf3.

2...g5



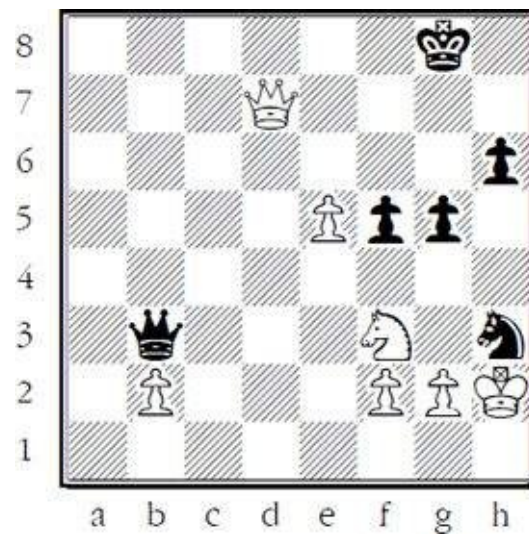
This attempts to complicate, which is often the thing to do when losing.

3.Qd7+



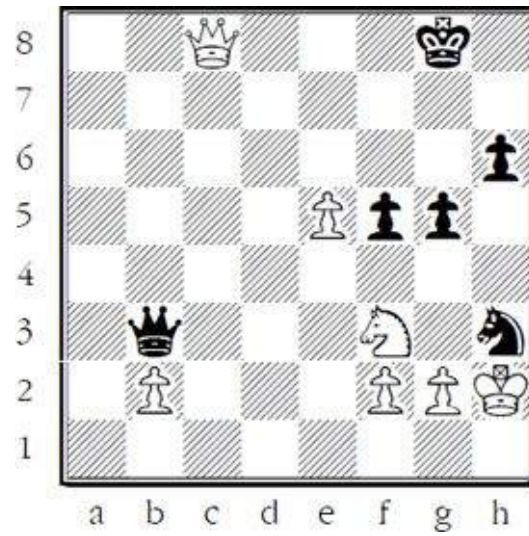
Unfortunately for Black, he's given White a chance to simplify.

3...Kg8



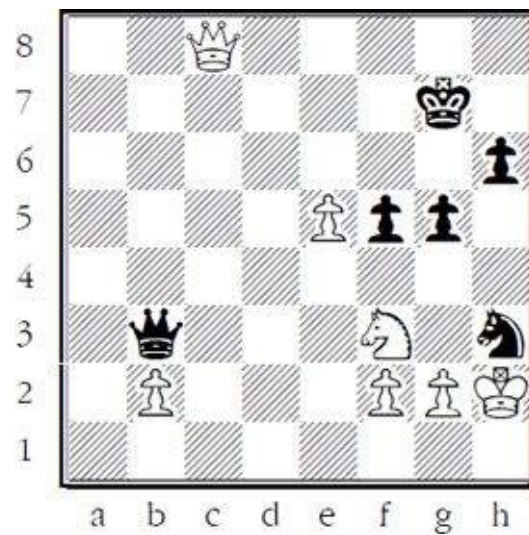
Here's a case where Black should step carefully.

4.Qc8+



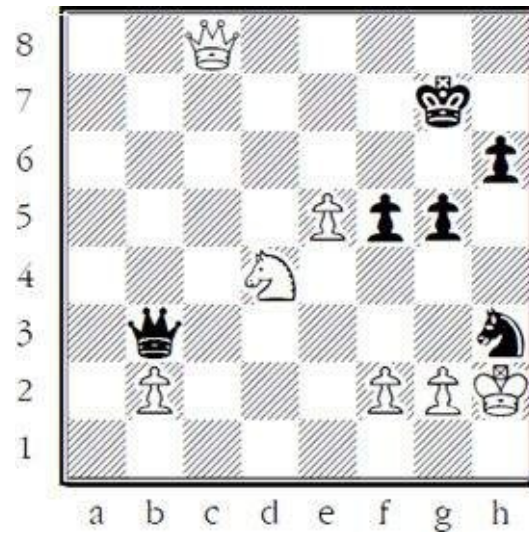
This forces the black king to commit while White still eyes the f-pawn.

4...Kg7



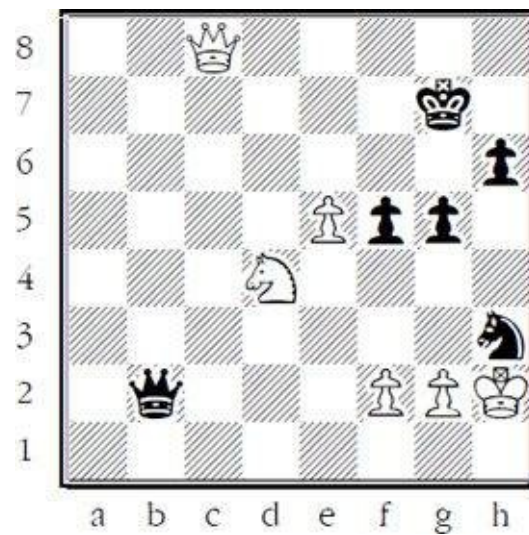
Black doesn't want White to be able to capture the f-pawn with check.

5.Nd4!



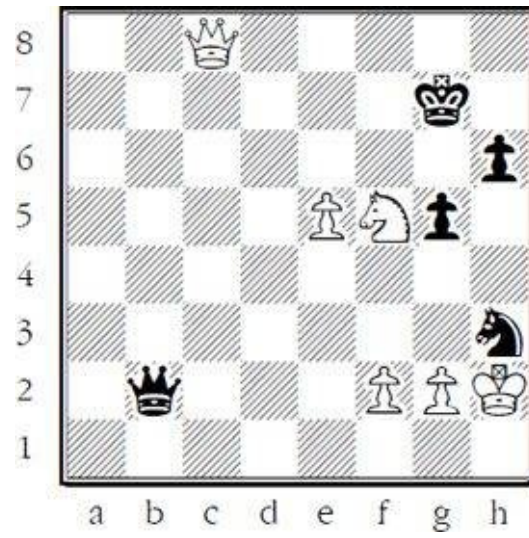
With this shift, White finds a way to double his attack force.

5...Qxb2



Black wins a pawn, threatens the knight and f-pawn, and also loses.

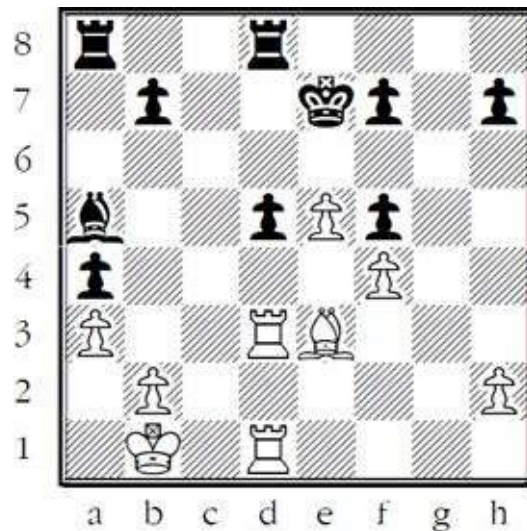
6.Nxf5+



If 6...Kg6, then 7.Qe6+ leads to mate; as does 6...Kf7 7.Qd7+. **(1-0)**

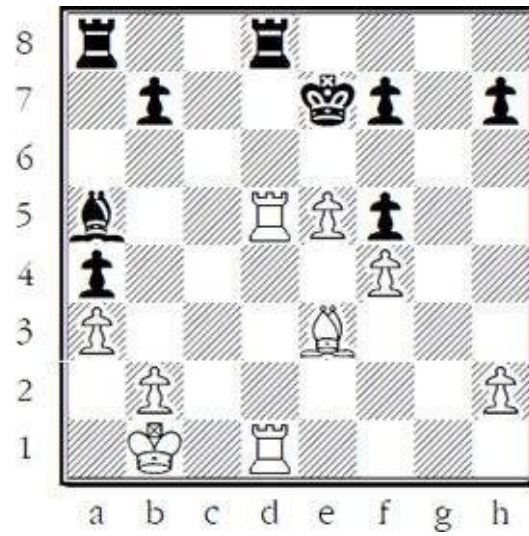
(31) Polugaevsky vs. Szilagyi, 1960

White is down a pawn



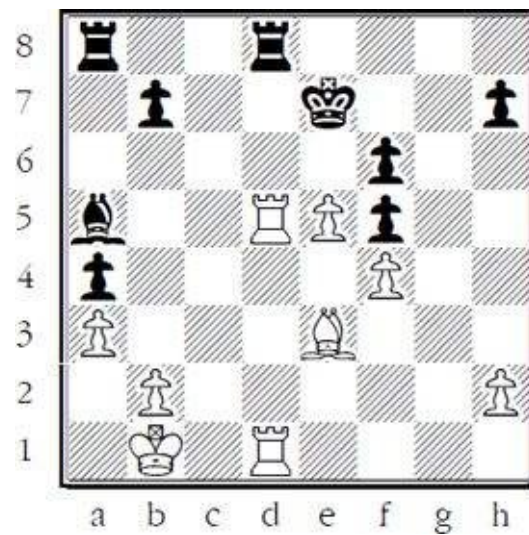
Black is up a pawn in name only, since with the move White can get it back. At that point it would be even, though White's game looks a tad sounder. Still, it's not at all clear how White is going to bring about a proper closing to the affair. Indeed, Black does have drawing chances, but they never materialize. Who can fault Black for what happens? Probably we should thank him, not just White, for the lovely conclusion we are about to receive.

1.Rxd5



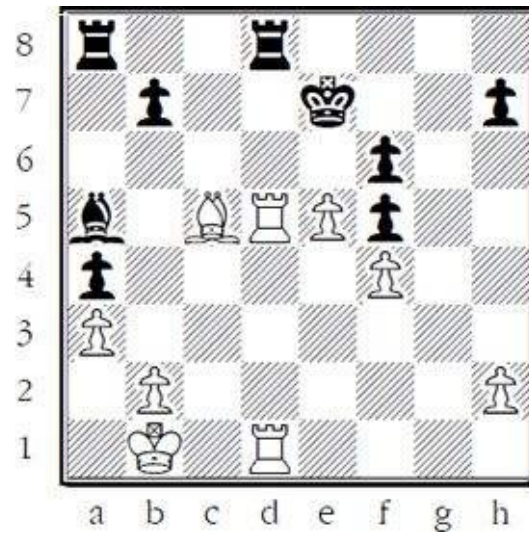
White evens the score.

1...f6



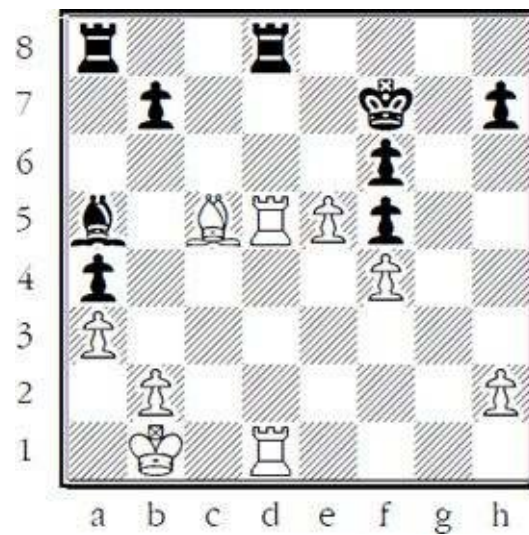
Black tries to rid himself of a doubled pawn, but trading a pair of rooks made sense.

2.Bc5+



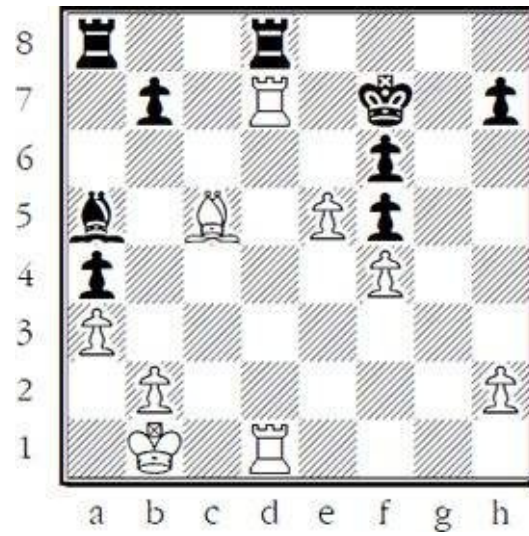
If 2...Ke6, then 3.Rd6+ gains a pawn.

2...Kf7



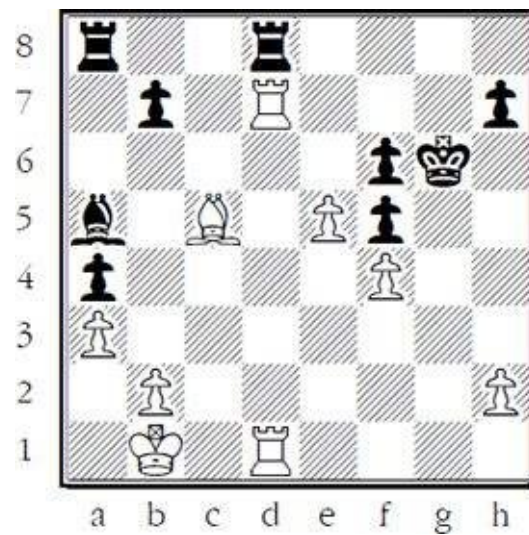
But this is not much better.

3.Rd7+



Black must tread carefully to avoid material loss.

3...Kg6

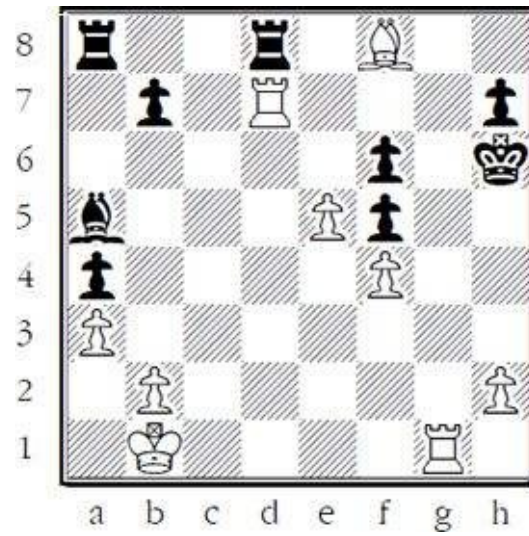


Now Black's king is vulnerable along the g-file. If only he had traded rooks.

4.Rg1+

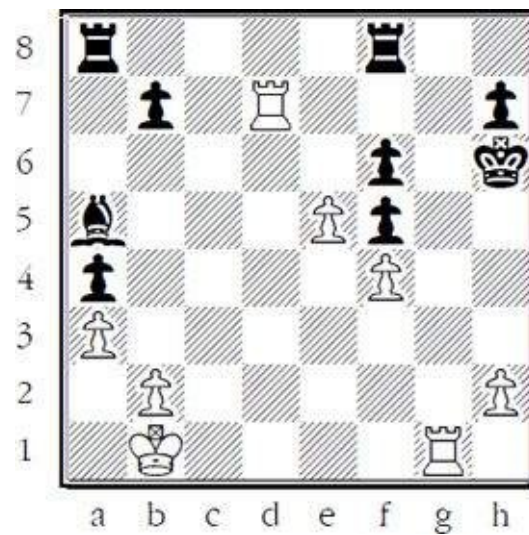


5.Bf8+!!



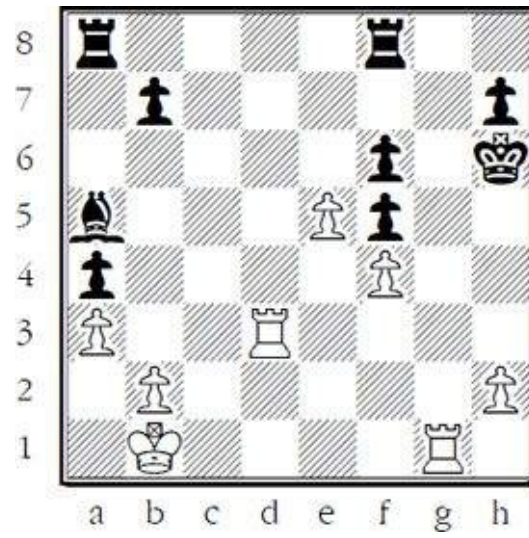
This is a truly nice move, deflecting the d8-rook from the d-file.

5...Rxf8



Black's capture was forced to avoid immediate mate at h7.

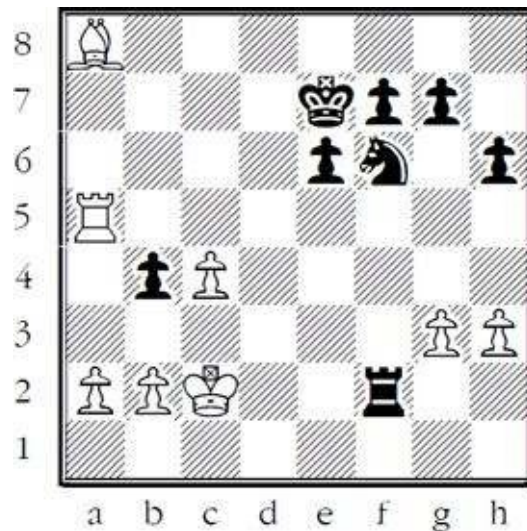
6.Rd3!



The rook shift wraps it up. Black cannot stop the deadly check at h3. **(1-0)**

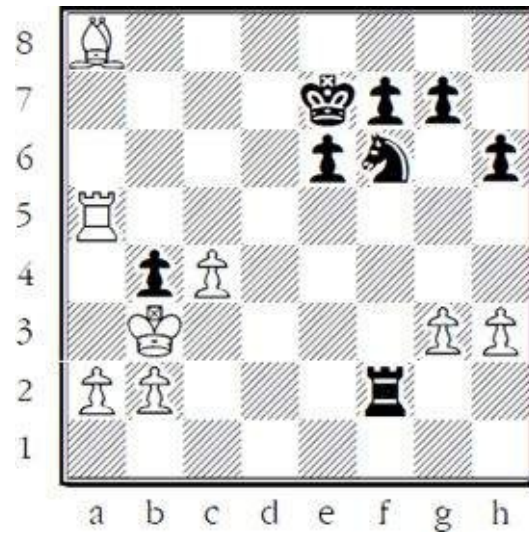
(32) Fischer vs. Petrosian, 1961

White is even



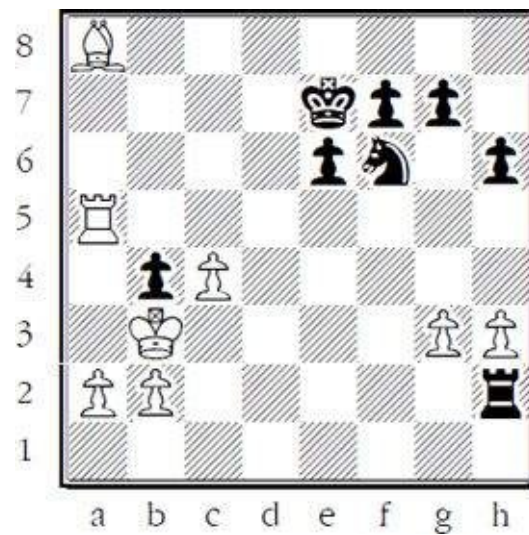
White has a bishop, Black a knight. Rooks and pawns are equal, but the pawns are imbalanced. White has a queenside majority and Black has one on the kingside. True, White begins the scenario in check, though his king has places to go. The real question is which king is better off? What happens may not prove the truth of the matter, but it's surely worthy of a smile. Enjoy!

1.Kb3



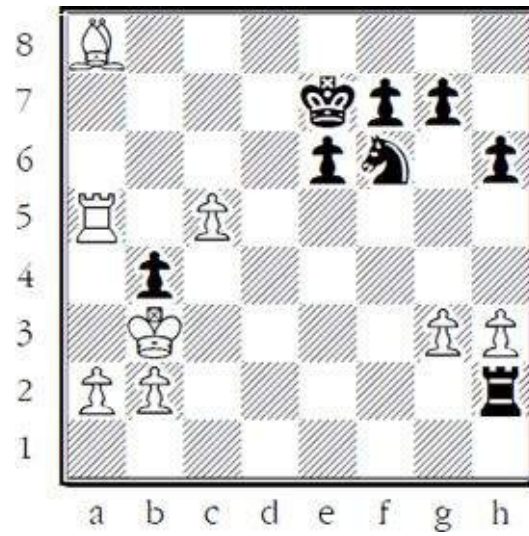
White keeps his b-pawn defended while he assails Black's.

1...Rh2



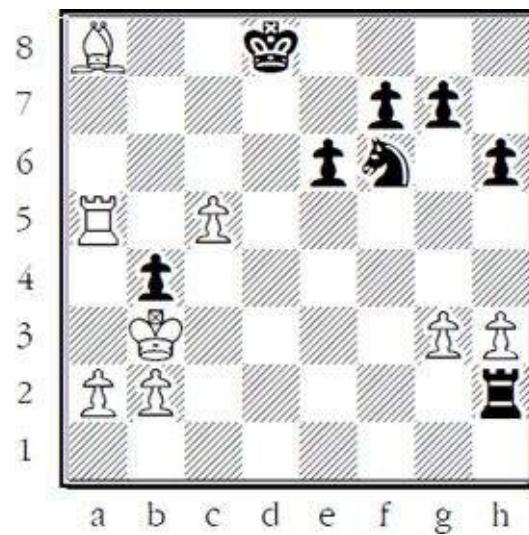
This is better than hanging a rook by 1...Rf3+?? 2.Bxf3.

2.c5



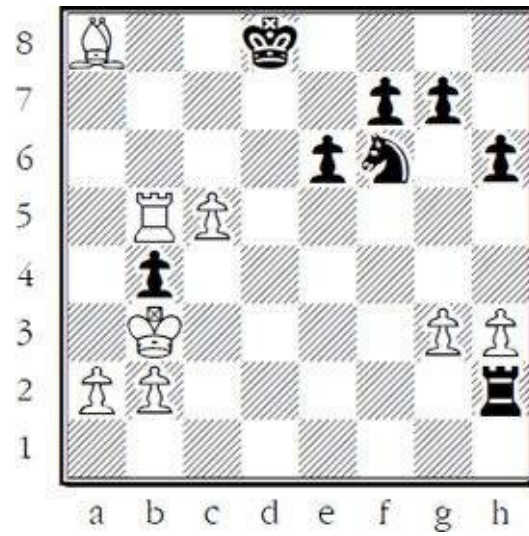
Here comes the c-pawn. Passed pawns must be pushed!

2...Kd8



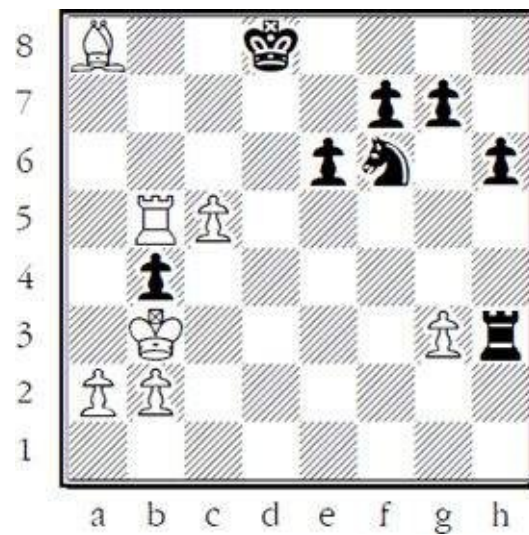
Black opts to deal with the advancing pawn.

3.Rb5



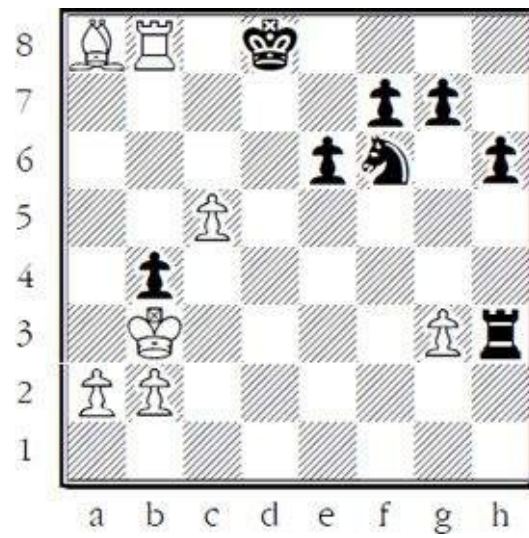
This gives the rook flexibility for attack and defense.

3...Rhx3



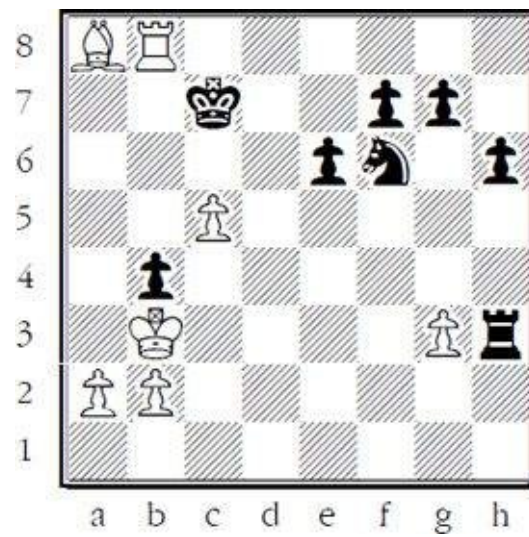
A pawn is a pawn is a pawn.

4.Rb8+



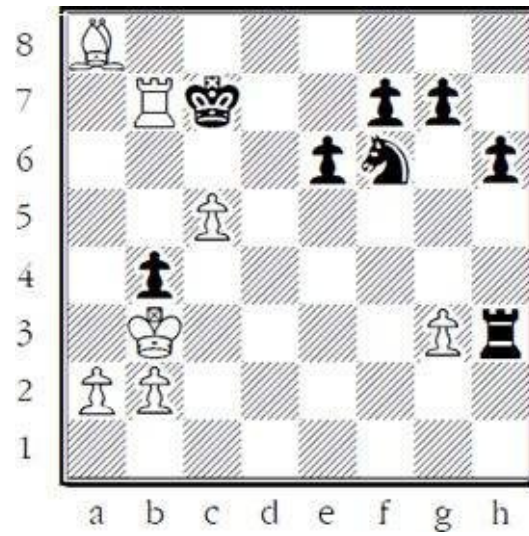
Black could play 4...Ke7, but aims for more.

5...Kc7



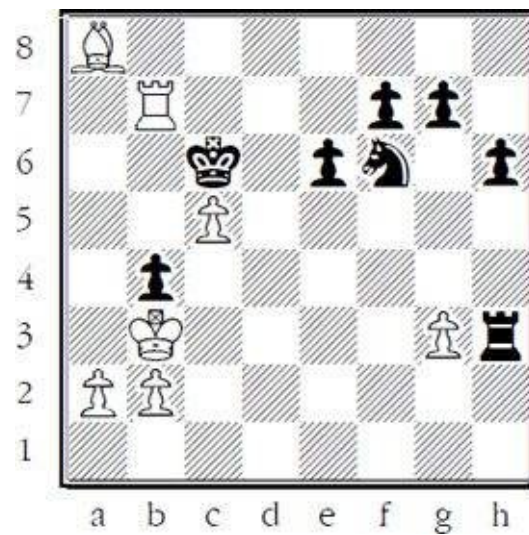
This is asking for it.

5.Rb7+



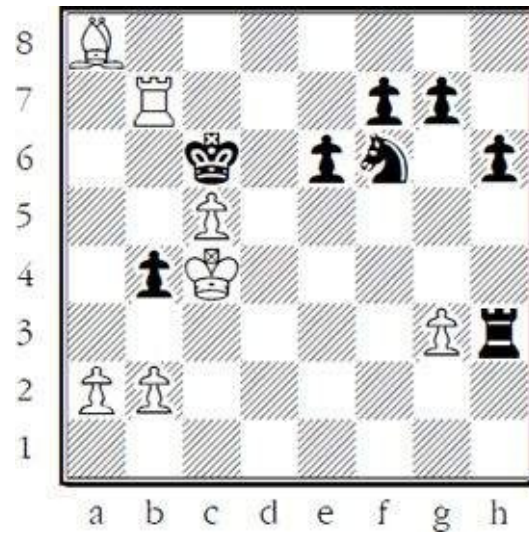
“I dare you to go to c6,” the rook says.

5...Kc6?



Black accepts the challenge, figuring he can survive the discovery.

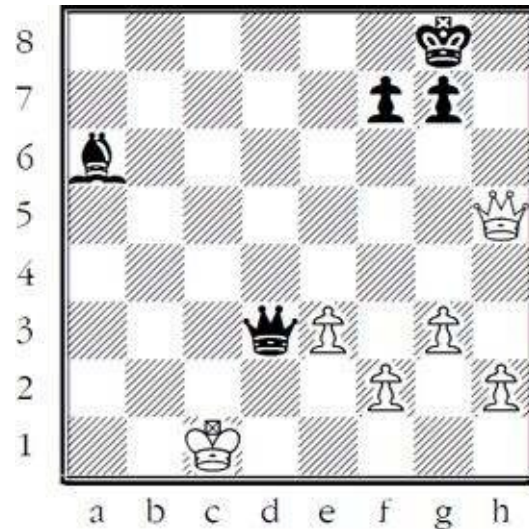
6.Kc4!



Not so fast. On 6...Nd7 there follows 7.Ra7 mate. **(1-0)**

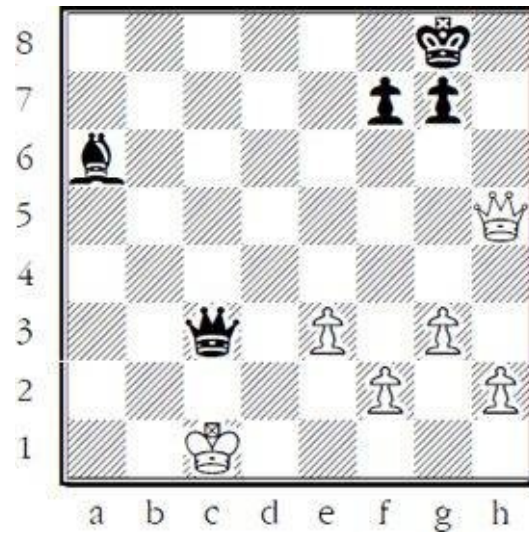
(33) Reshevsky vs. Fischer, 1964

Black is up a bishop for two pawns



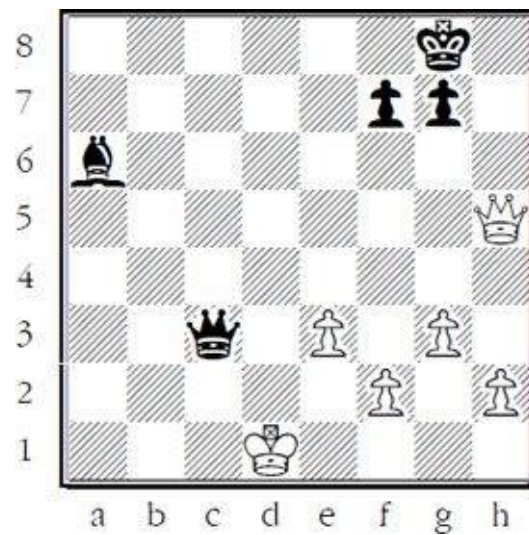
Black is somewhat ahead, having a bishop for two pawns. But all the pawns are on the kingside, and unless Black chances to win them, maybe White could hold out, at least for a while. Then there's White's king. It doesn't have any cover to speak of. If only Black could find a way to post his bishop better. Leave it to Fischer to find the way.

1...Qc3+



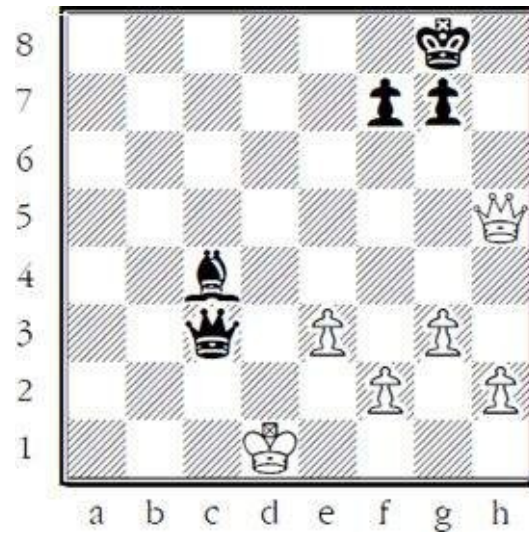
White has two unsavory places to go.

2.Kd1



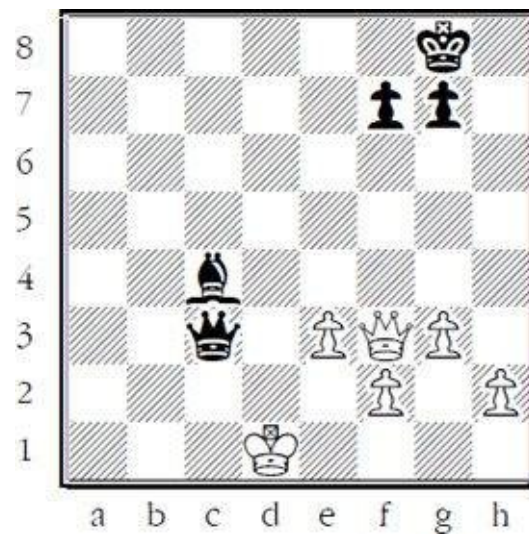
The white king heads for the kingside.

2...Bc4!



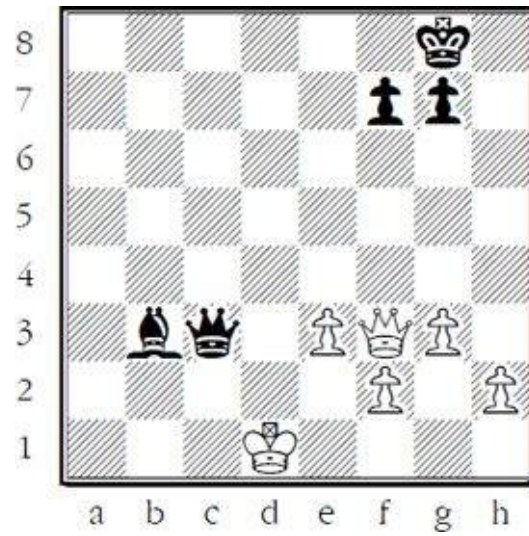
Black repositions his bishop for a check at b3.

3.Qf3



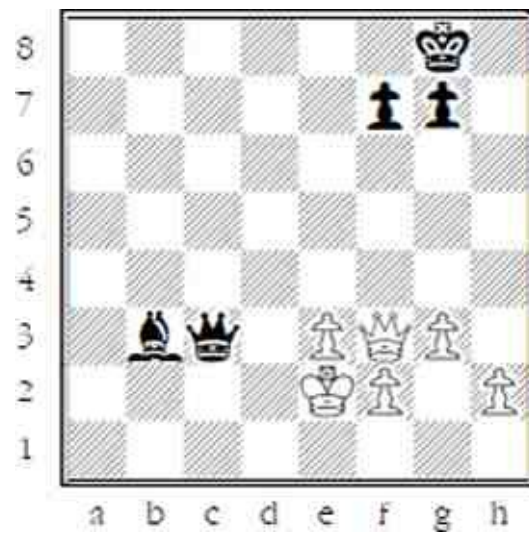
White hopes to give his own check, here on a8.

3...Bb3+



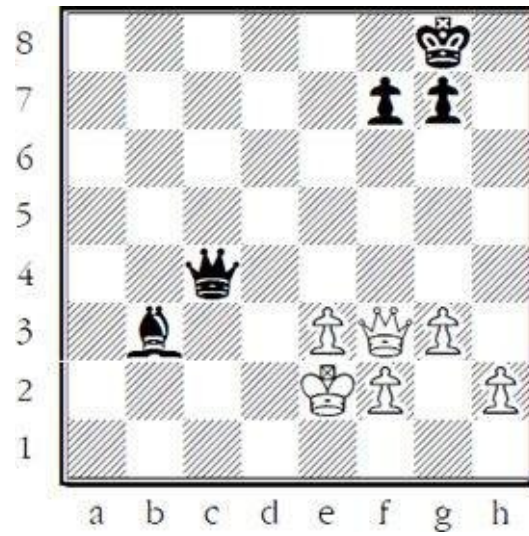
White has only one move.

4.Ke2



The king strives for escape at f1 and shelter at g2.

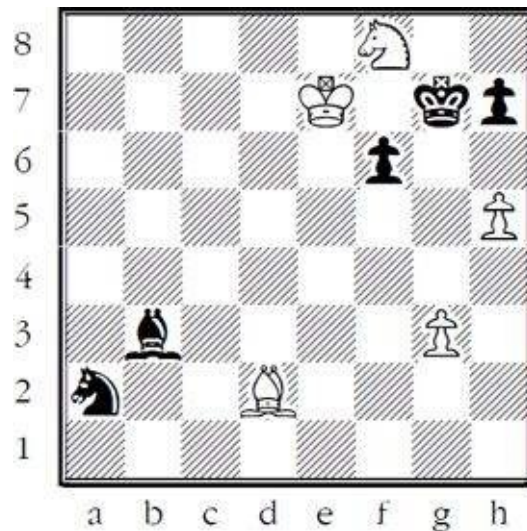
4...Qc4+!



This stops Ke2-f1 and sets up 5.Kd2 (5.Ke1 Qc1+ mates next move) 5...Qc2+ 6.Ke1 Qc1+ 7.Ke2 (or 7.Qd1 Qxd1 mate) 7...Qd1 mate. But Black resigns, just in time. **(0-1)**

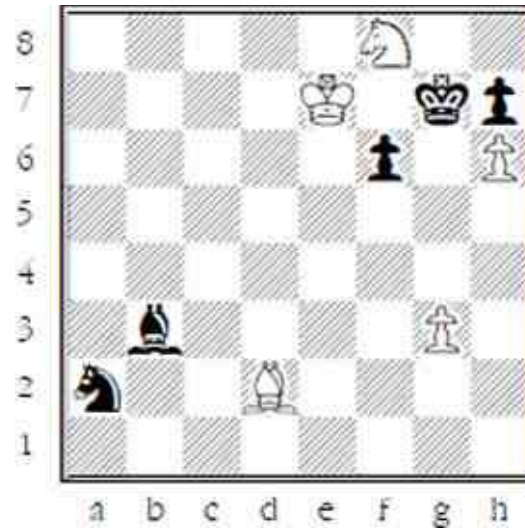
(34) Fischer vs. Witczek, 1964

White is even



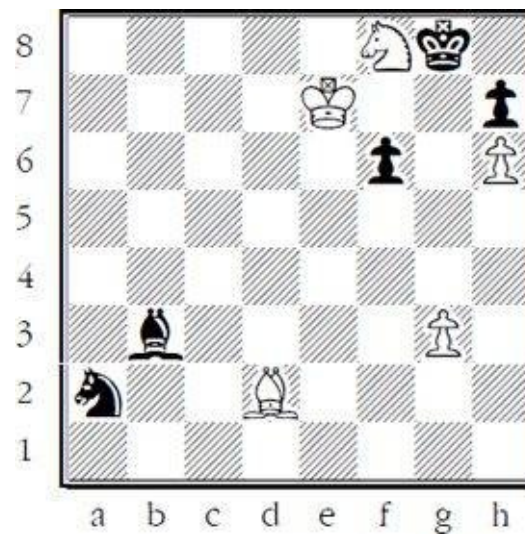
Bishop and knight vs. bishop and knight: but White has the chances. Black's f-pawn is shaky, and his knight doesn't have a safe move. Indeed, it's corralled by White's bishop. Maybe even worse is the fact that the light-square bishop can't keep White off the dark squares. And let's not forget the kings. White's is much more aggressive. Fischer exploits all of this beautifully.

1.h6+



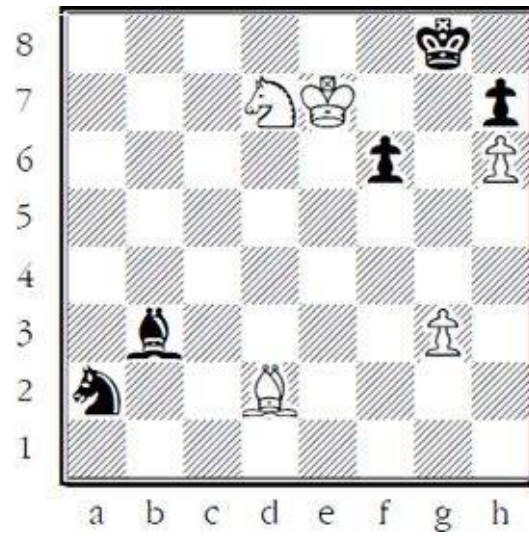
This check drives the king back.

1...Kg8



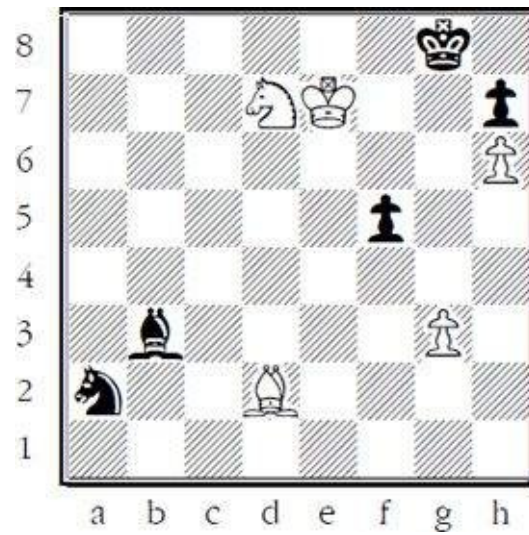
Black retreats grudgingly, still fighting for space, hand to hand.

2.Nd7



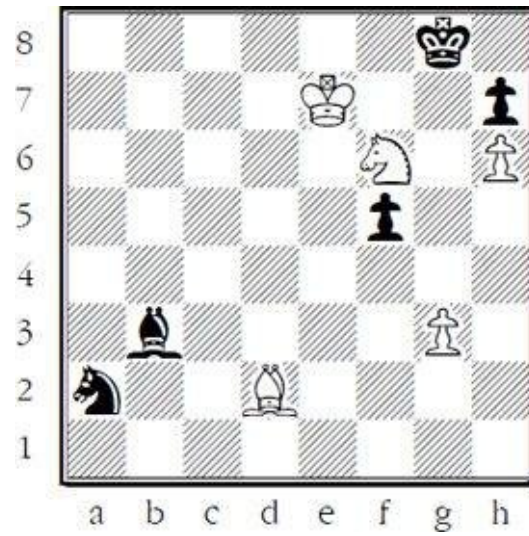
White aims to drive the king to the corner.

2...f5



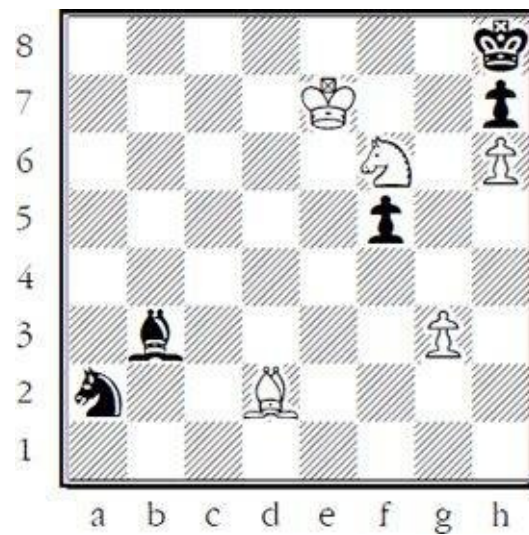
Black figures he might as well hold onto the pawn.

3.Nf6+



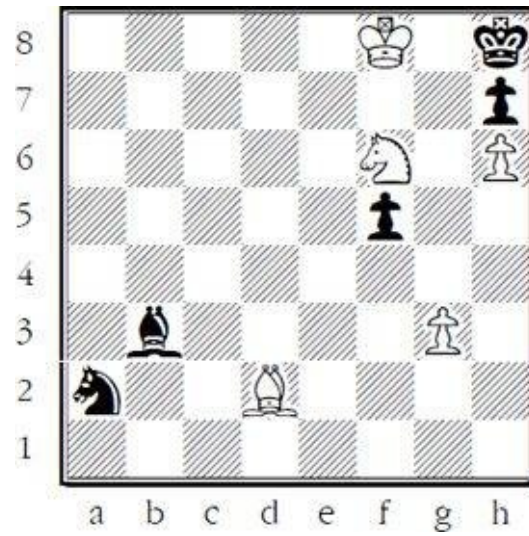
Black is helpless to stop White's use of the dark squares.

3...Kh8



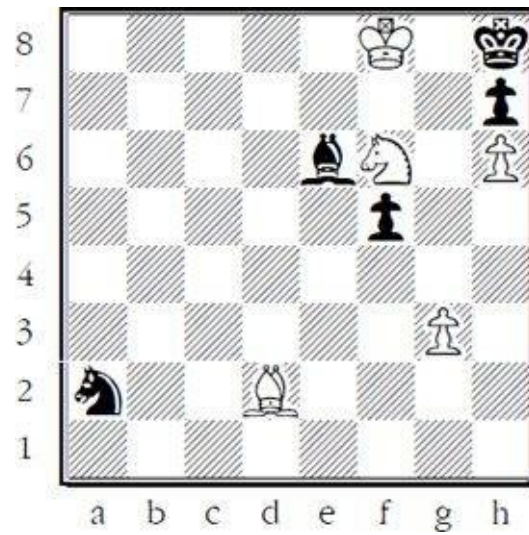
This is Black's only move.

4.Kf8



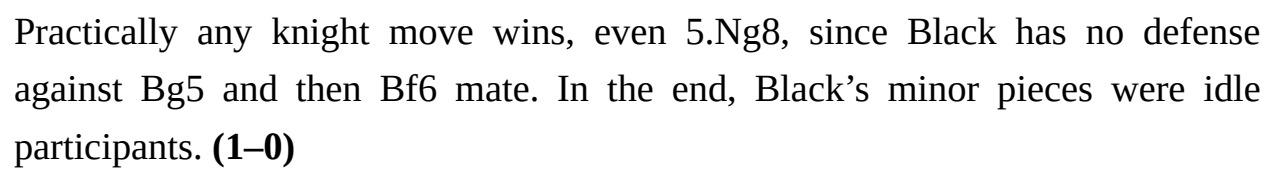
Now Black has no way to escape the corner.

4...Be6



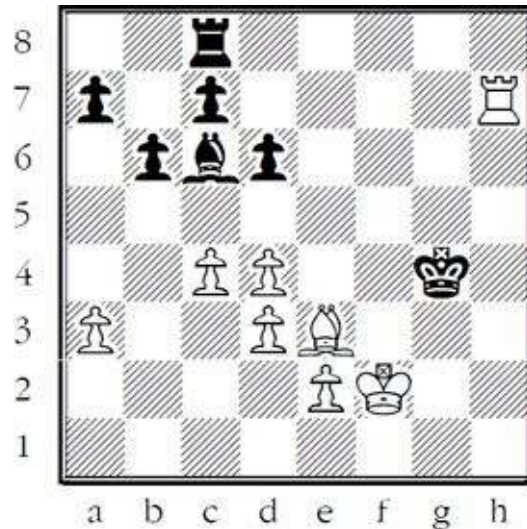
Black bides his time, wondering how White is to proceed.

5.Nd5



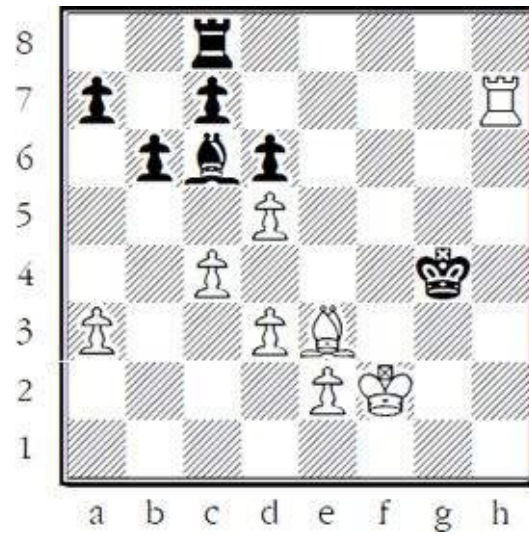
(35) Botvinnik vs. Smyslov, 1964

White is up a pawn



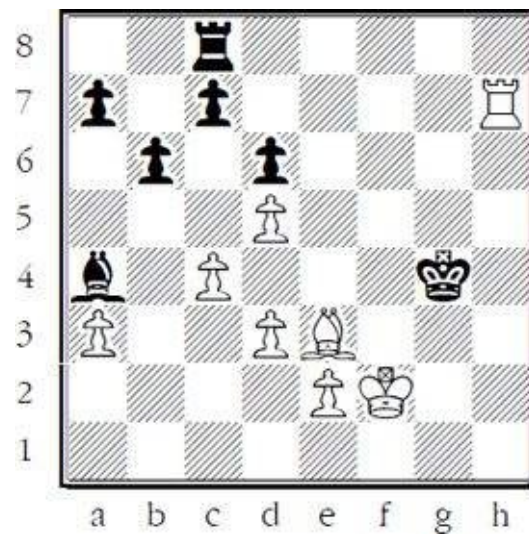
It's another one of those incredible battles between Botvinnik and Smyslov. Here it's Botvinnik with the extra pawn, though it's doubled, and the bishops are of opposite color. Still, it seems as if Black can hold it together, with his c-pawn defended. But wait a minute. Botvinnik has some tricks to fashion. One of them ends in mate.

1.d5



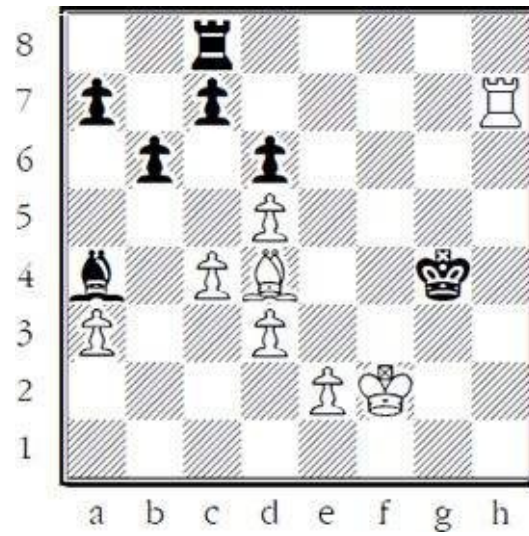
Driving away the bishop and opening the a1–h8 diagonal.

1...Ba4



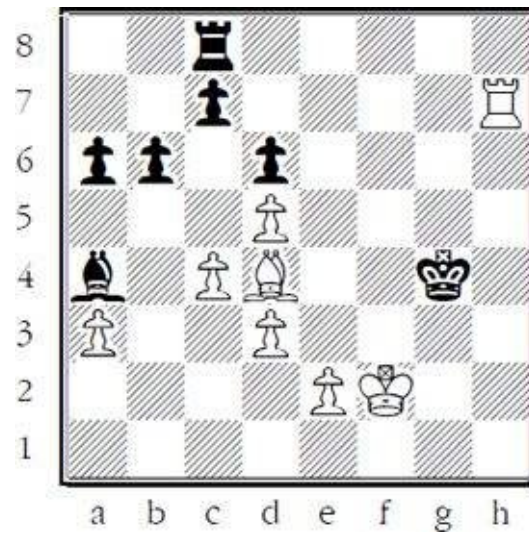
Black tries to keep his bishop active.

2.Bd4



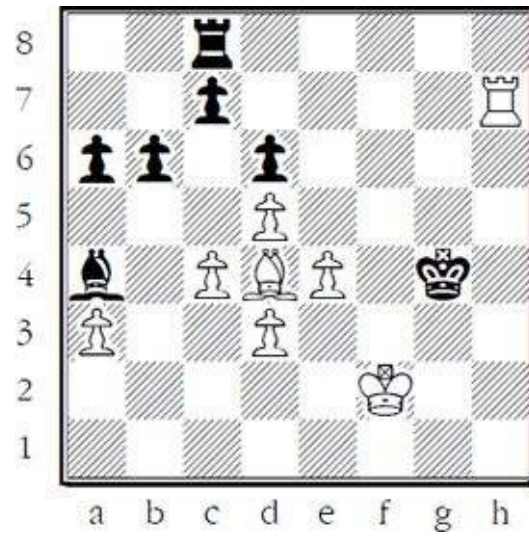
White improves his position and frees the e-pawn for movement.

2...a6



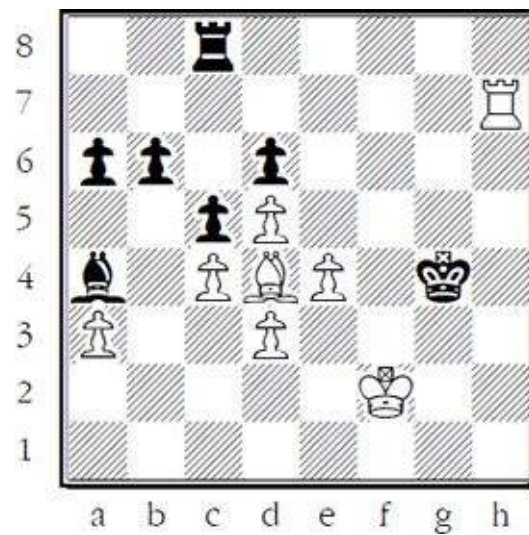
Black gets his a-pawn off the second rank, trying to cope with the rapacity of White's rook.

3.e4



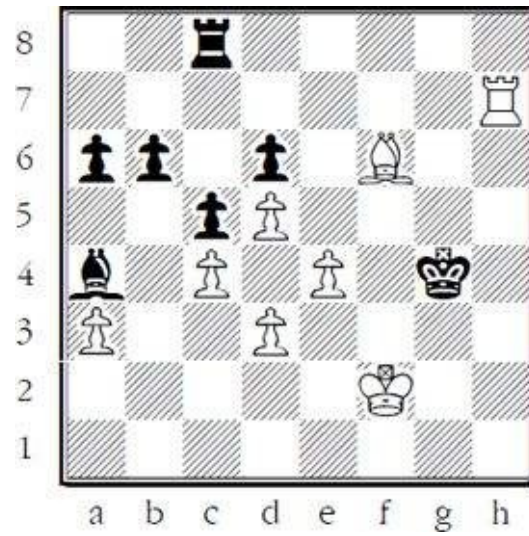
White seizes f5 and now has shelter for his king at e3 along the e-file.

3...c5



Finally, Black eliminates the c7 weakness.

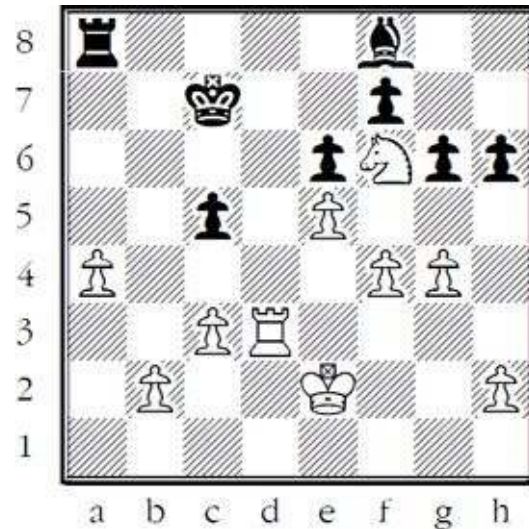
4.Bf6!



This is where it gets tricky. The killer (Rh4 mate) can be delayed, not stopped.
(1-0)

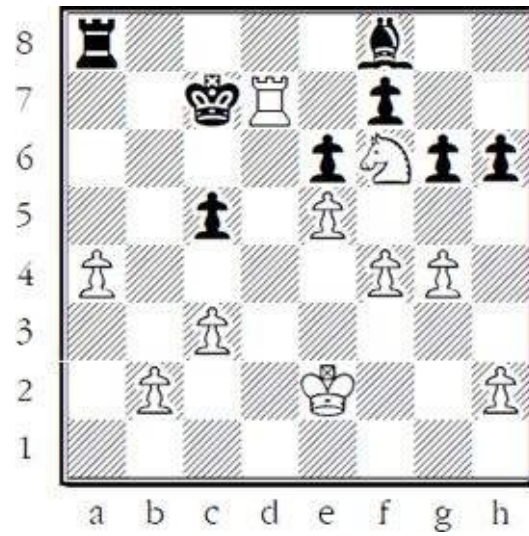
(36) Fischer vs. Dura0, 1966

White is up two pawns



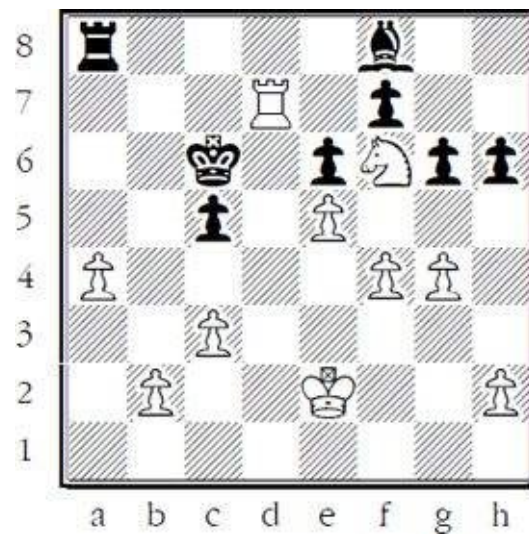
White is ahead by a couple of pawns, and there are other differences as well, such as having a knight for a bishop. He also has the initiative and a continuing attack, which practically plays itself. Still, one or two inaccuracies and the position might be saved. But Fischer doesn't give his opponent a chance to save anything. Even so, the final trap is amusing.

1.Rd7+



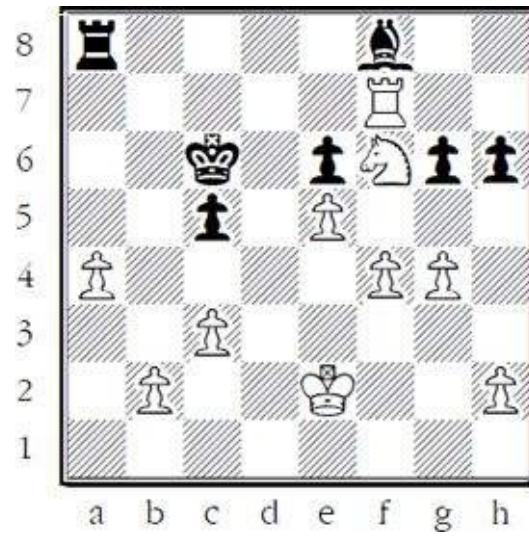
Black's choice is to move his king back or up.

1...Kc6



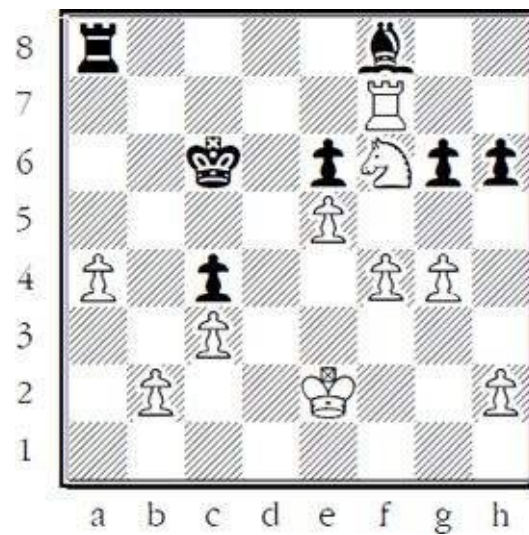
He chooses to go up and fight.

2.Rxf7



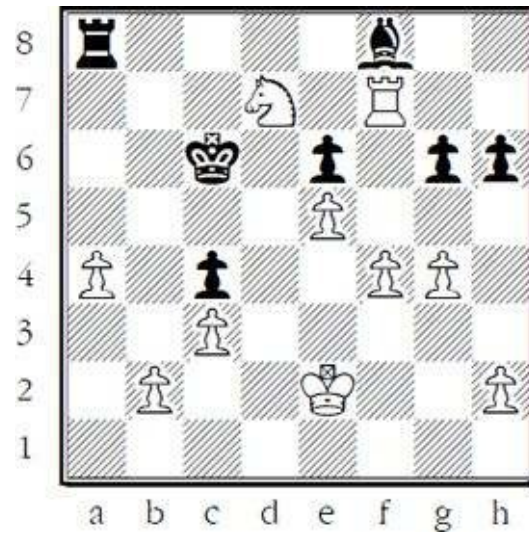
Now the a-pawn can't be taken because the bishop would then hang.

2...c4



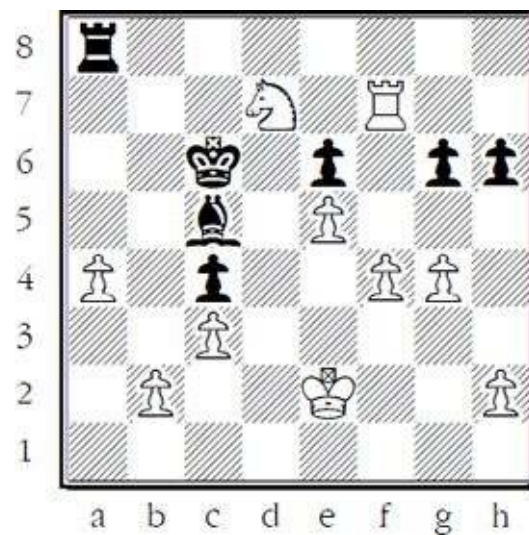
Black clears c5 for the bishop's planned escape.

3.Nd7



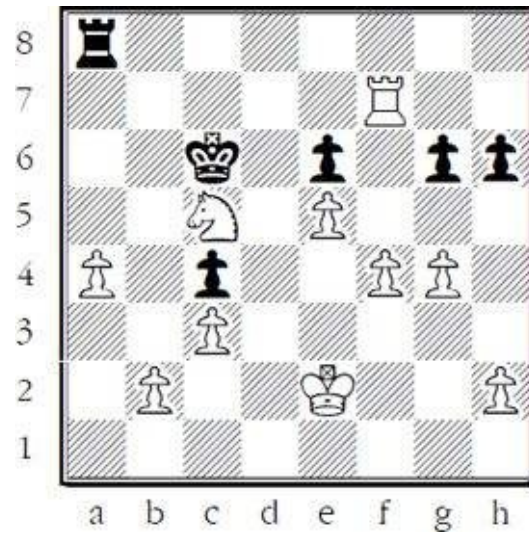
White positions to capture the bishop, leading to further simplification. When ahead, trade.

3...Bc5



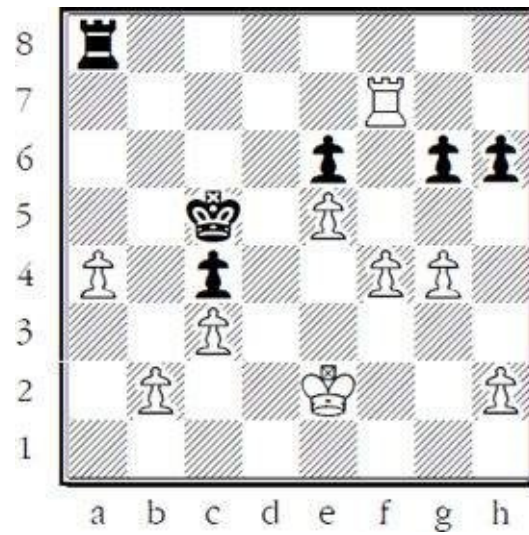
Finally, the bishop gets out, but not for long.

4.Nxc5



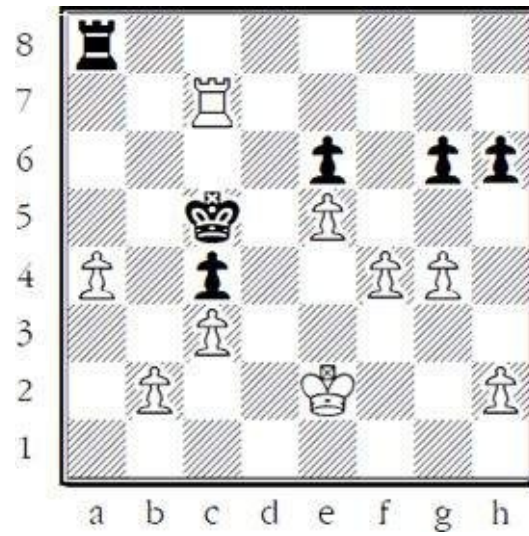
And now, the bishop is no more.

4...Kxc5



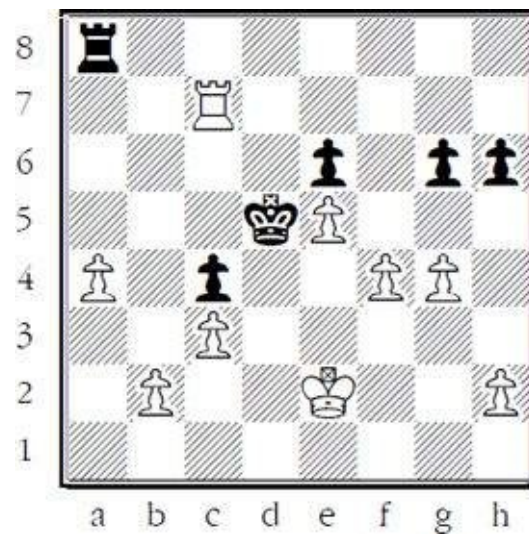
Black takes back, hoping to capture on a4.

5.Rc7+



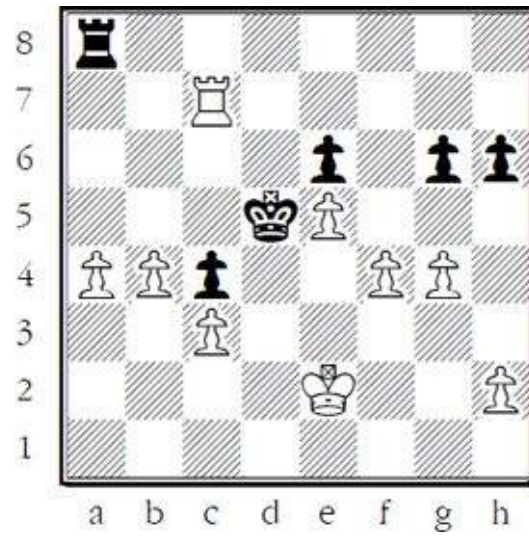
If 5...Kb6, White has 6.Rxc4, and the game remains hopeless.

5...Kd5?



The c-pawn stays protected and Black eyes a king invasion.

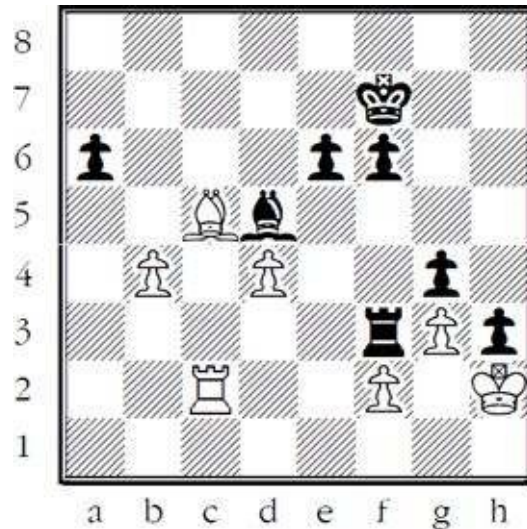
6.b4!



If 6...cxb3, then 7.Kd3!, with mate soon to follow, delayed only by a rook sac.
(1-0)

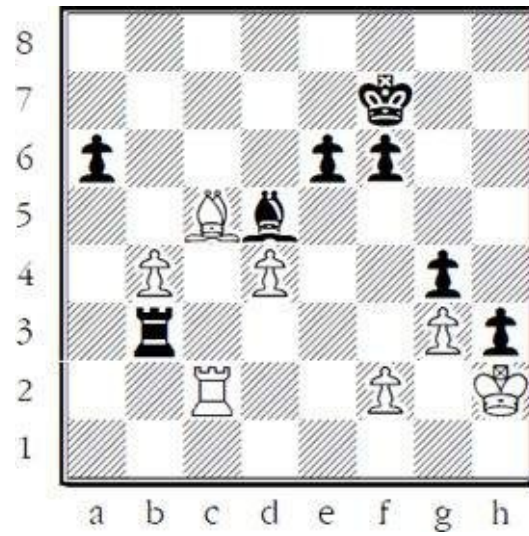
(37) Letelier vs. Smyslov, 1967

Black is up a pawn



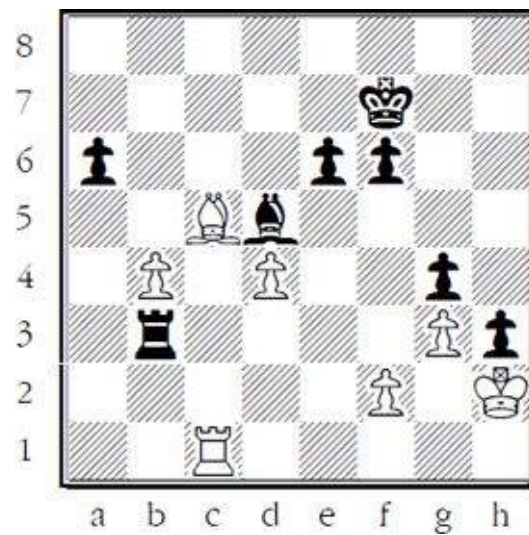
Although Black is slightly ahead, the opposite color bishops present a barrier to overcome. Fortunately for Black, he also has a pesky rook, which in tandem with his bishop may be able to surmount all obstacles. The dangerously passed and protected h-pawn doesn't hurt Black's chances either. But it's also in the way. Who needs rook-pawns? Watch what Smyslov does with them.

1...Rb3



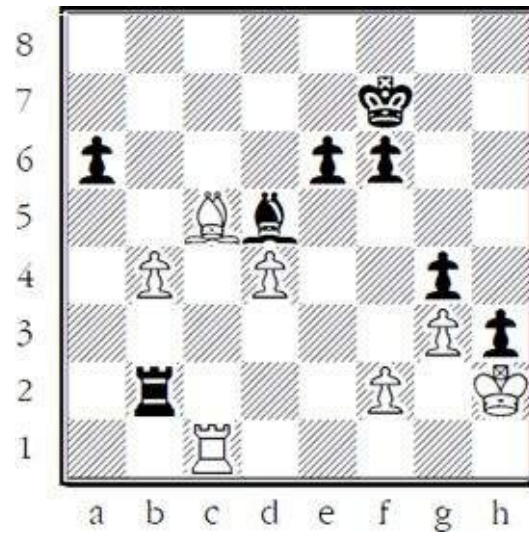
Black prepares to invade the last rank.

2.Rc1



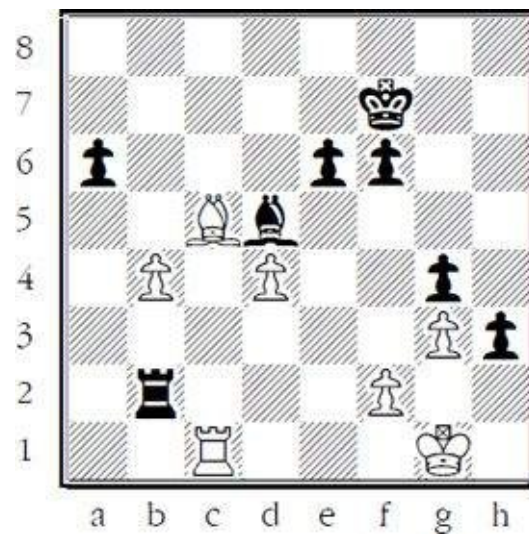
White stops Rb1, but there's more trouble to follow.

2...Rb2



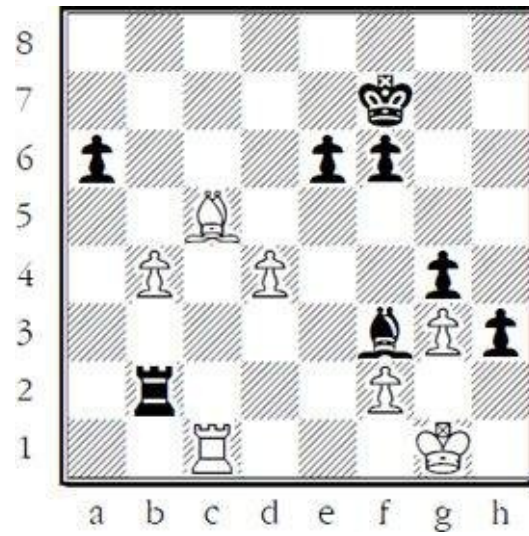
Black's rook seizes its seventh rank.

3.Kg1



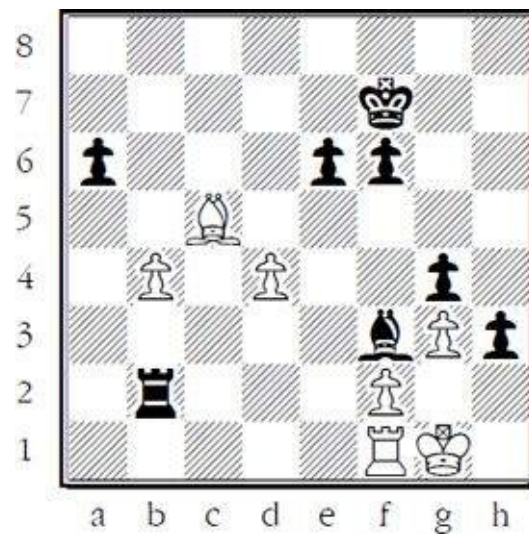
The f-pawn was threatened.

3...Bf3



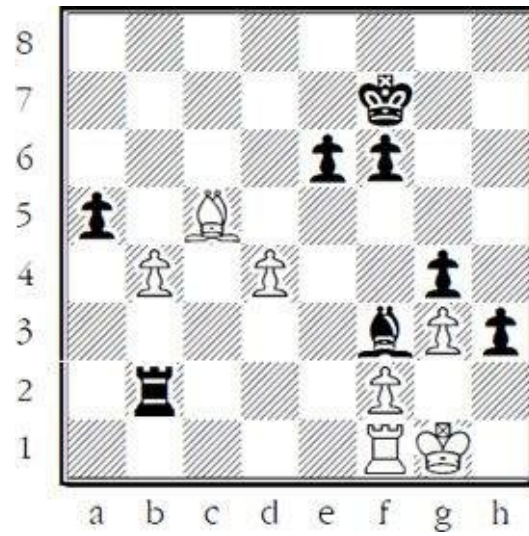
The bishop sinks in and prevents the f-pawn's movement.

4.Rf1



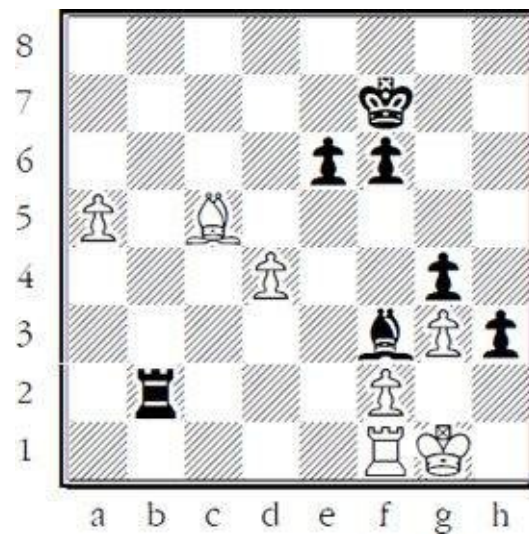
White adds protection to f2. How is Black to break through?

4...a5!



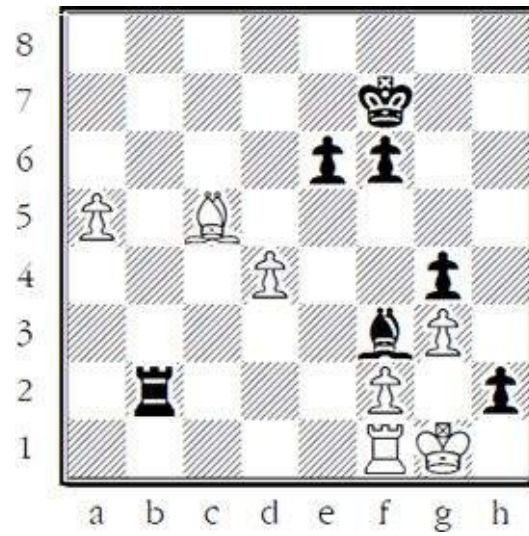
The b-pawn is endangered. Who needed the weak a-pawn anyway?

5.bxa5



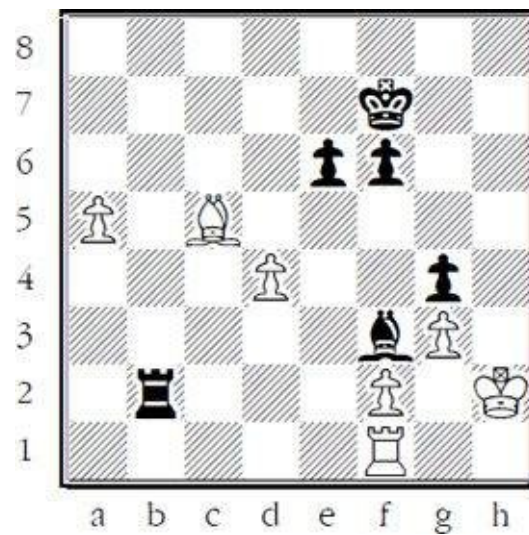
So White has won a pawn.

5...h2+!



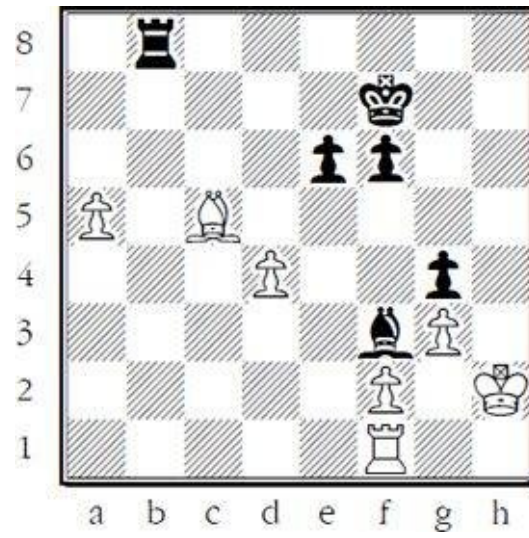
Who needs the strong h-pawn? White has no choice.

6.Kxh2



The h-file is now open for immediate use.

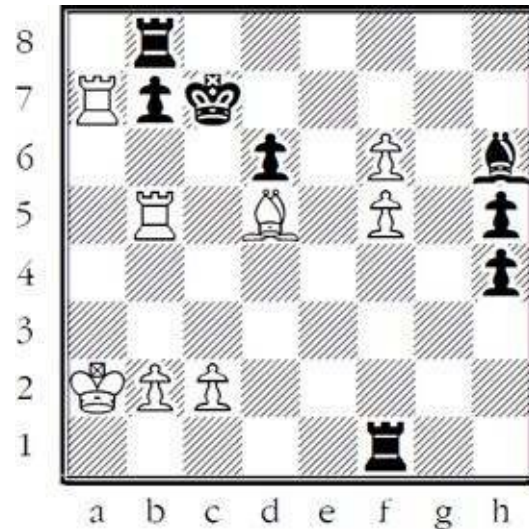
6...Rb8



White can only delay the mate (7.Bf8). There's no way to avoid a quick end. **(0–1)**

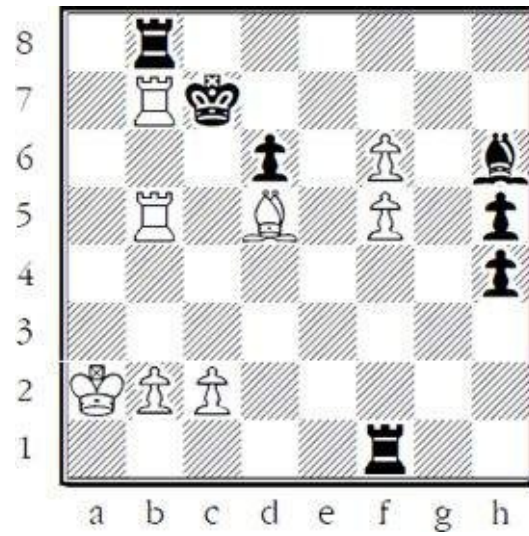
(38) Karpov vs. Byrne, 1971

White is even



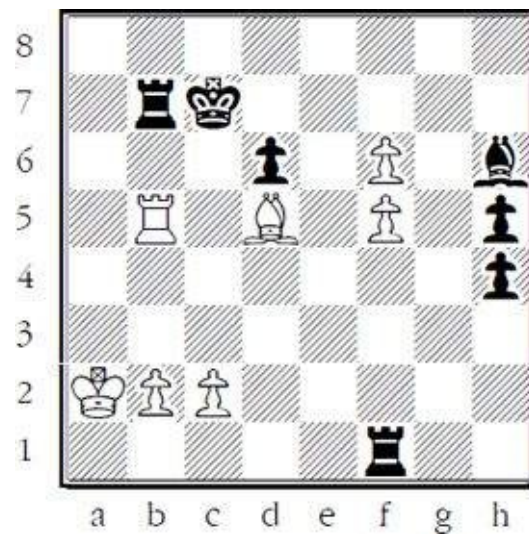
There's a lot happening here. Passed doubled pawns and two rooks for each side, along with bishops of opposite color. White seems to have the edge, with a clear initiative and an apparent opportunity to go after Black's king. To be sure, White can win a pawn with check. But that's not why the game doesn't last much longer. There's just too much occurring around and near the black king.

1.Raxb7+



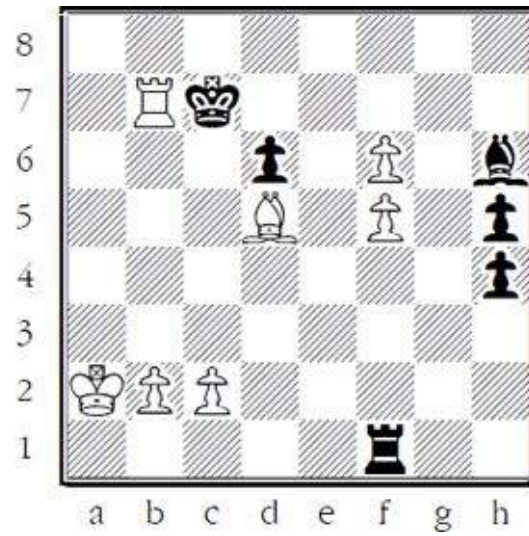
White gains a pawn and keeps the move.

1...Rxb7



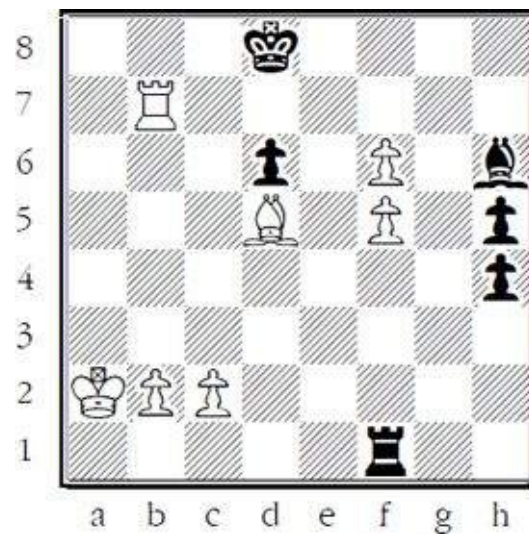
Black must take a rook to avoid losing one.

2.Rxb7+



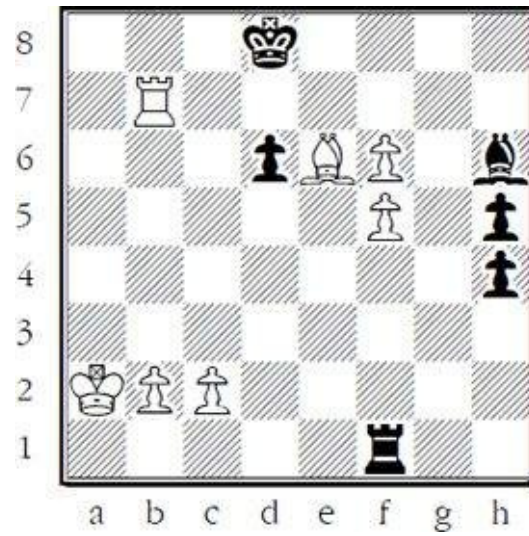
White takes back, also with check, with his rook commandingly positioned.

2...Kd8



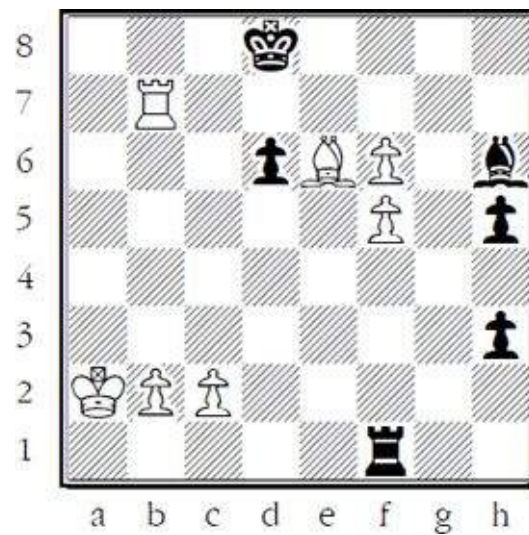
Black hopes to deal with the advancing pawns.

3.Be6



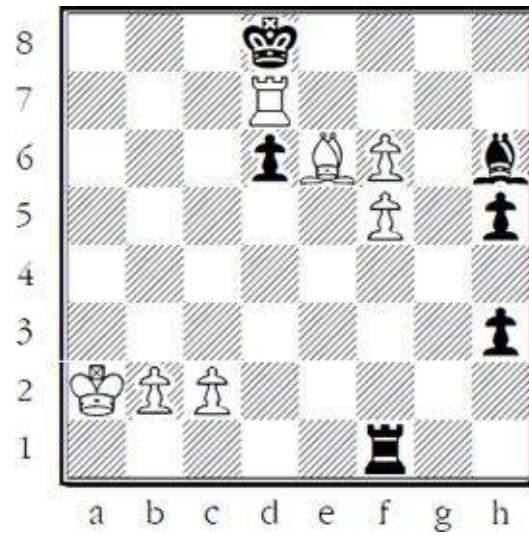
White tightens the noose.

3...h3



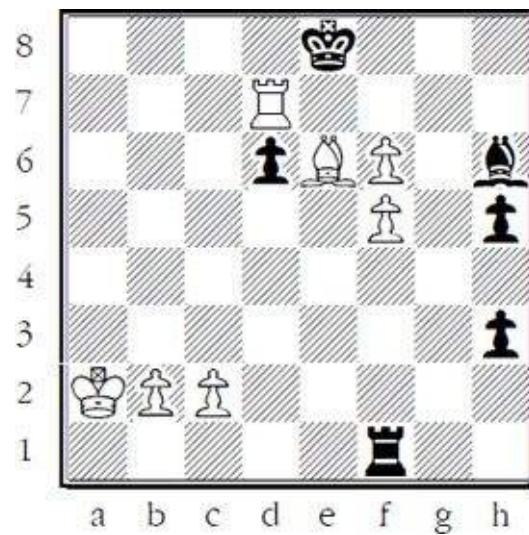
Black must try to make a new queen. It doesn't look promising.

4.Rd7+



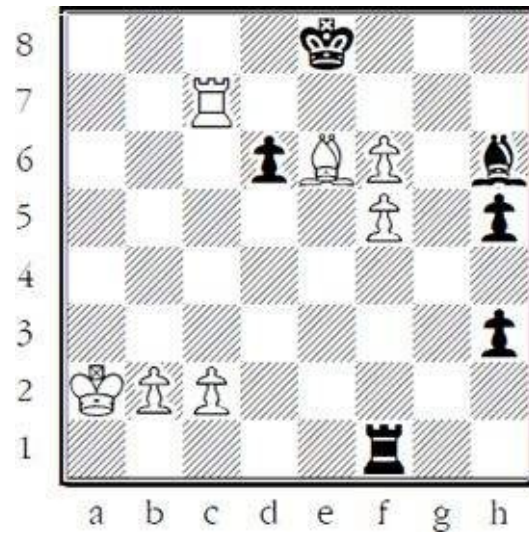
This is a time-gaining check, and it's given to see where the black king goes.

4...Ke8



Black avoids the discovery ensuing from 4...Kc8.

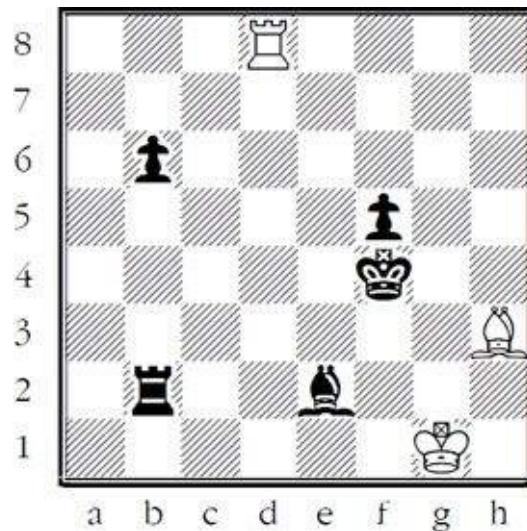
5.Rc7



Mate can only be delayed. **(1-0)**

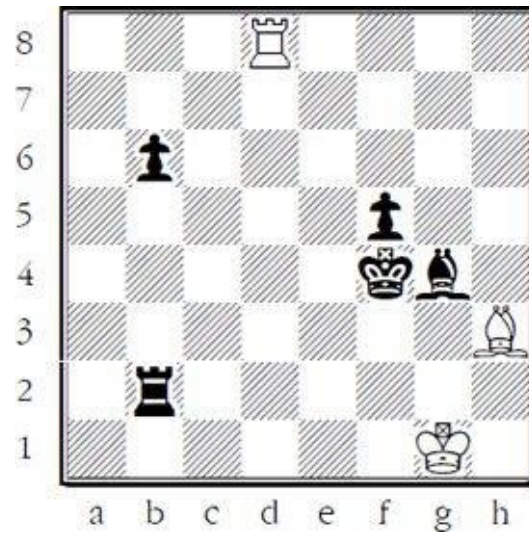
(39) Larsen vs. Fischer, 1971

Black is up two pawns



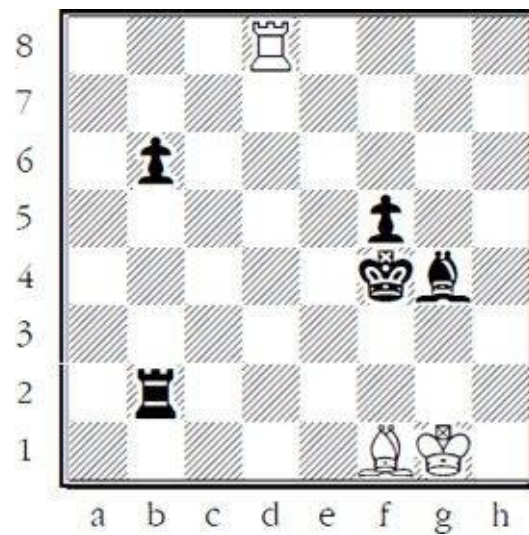
Barring a blunder, Black has all the winning chances. White hopes to muster annoying counterplay with his bishop and rook, and the key may be how easy it is for Black's king to find shelter, stopping pesky rook checks. But it's White's king with the real problems. White isn't able to find shelter for his king, and the ending is unexpected and quite cute.

1...Bg4!



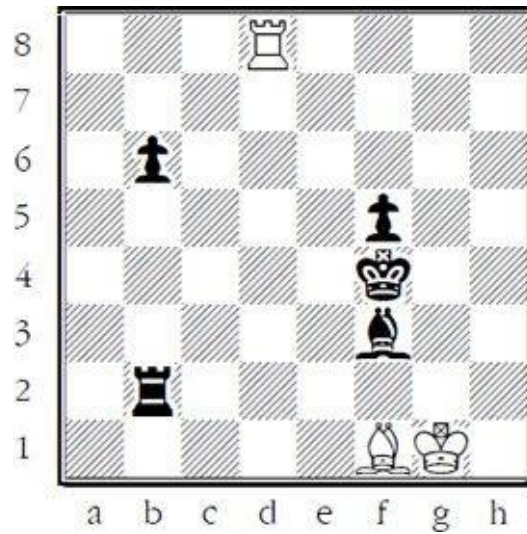
Black offers a bishop trade and closes down the g-file.

2.Bf1



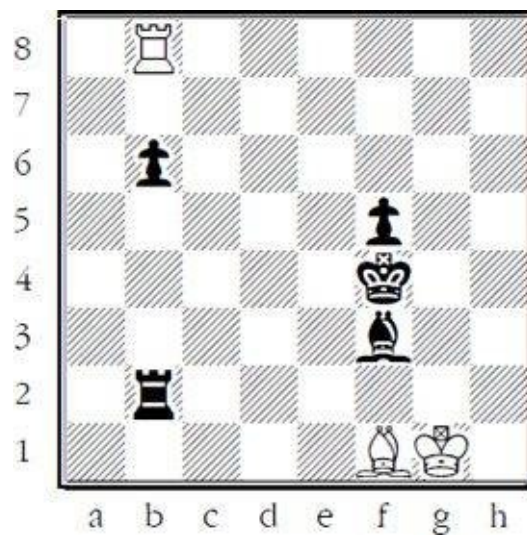
White shields his king along the edge and tries to be flexible.

2...Bf3



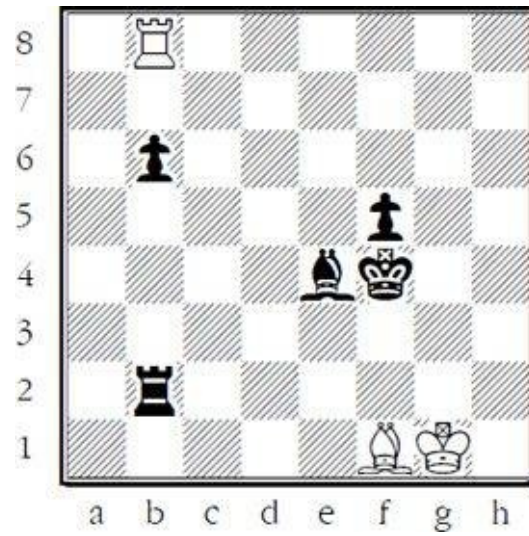
Black seizes a good diagonal and is ready to use the bishop for cover on the e-file.

3.Rb8



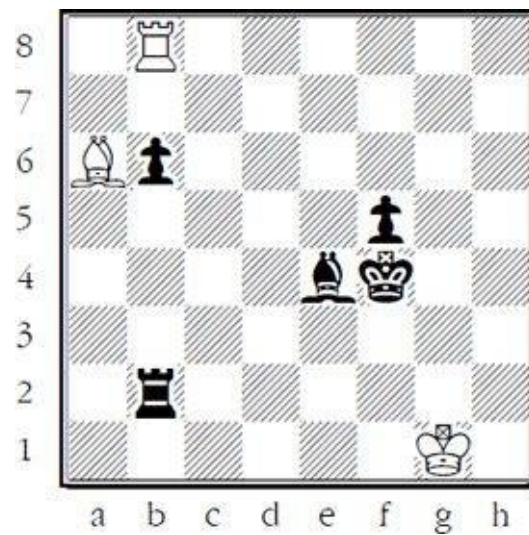
White keeps an eye on the b-pawn, not that Black was thinking about advancing it.

3...Be4



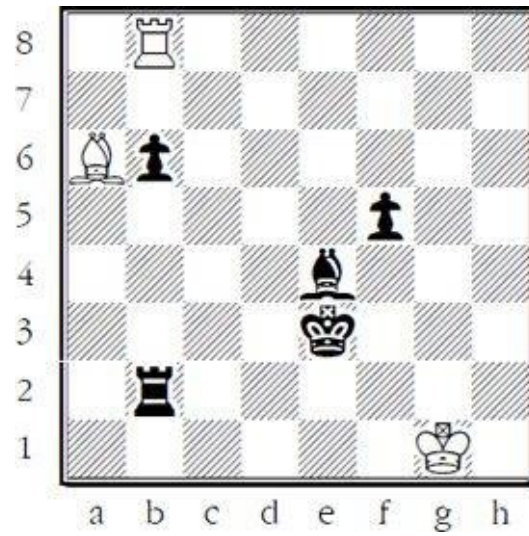
This centering enables the black king to invade with shielding along the kingfile.

4.Ba6



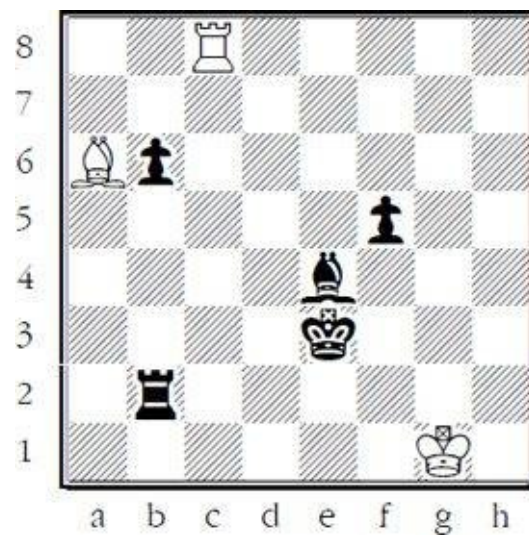
White seeks activity, but this doesn't do much.

4...Ke3!



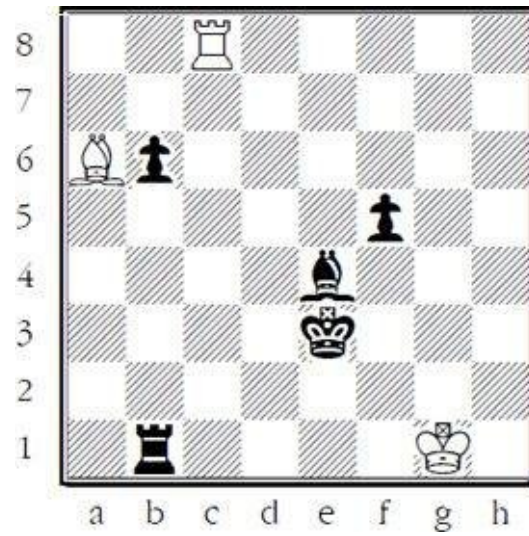
Black's forces are poised for the final push. Four units are ready to harass White's king.

5.Rc8



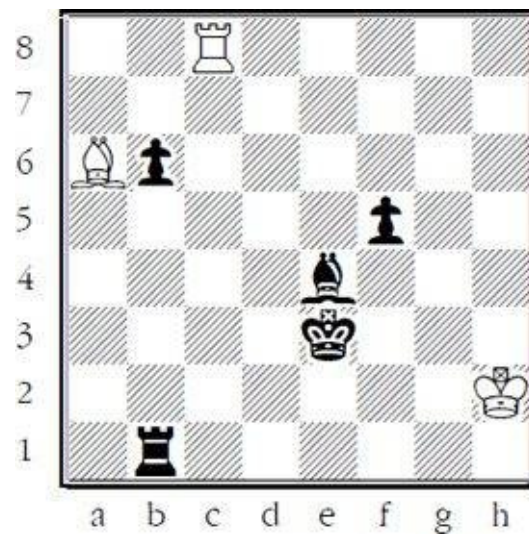
White redeploys his rook for possible checks and defense.

5...Rb1+



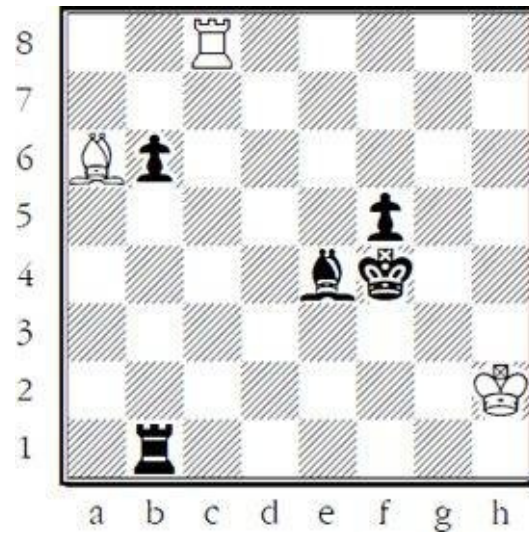
This stops Rc8-c1.

6.Kh2



On 6.Bf1 Black has 6...Bd3.

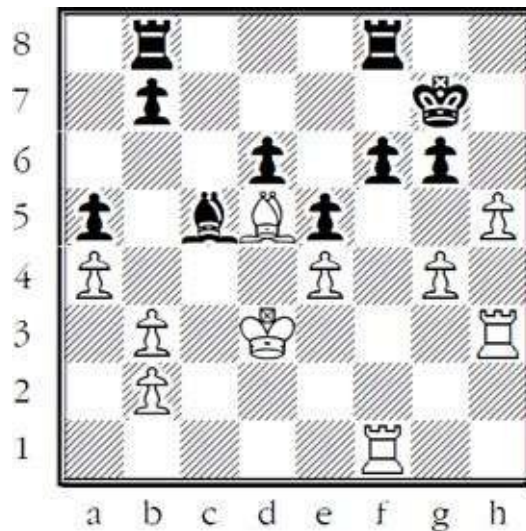
6...Kf4!



White is caught in a mating net. He can only delay the mating check at h1. **(0-1)**

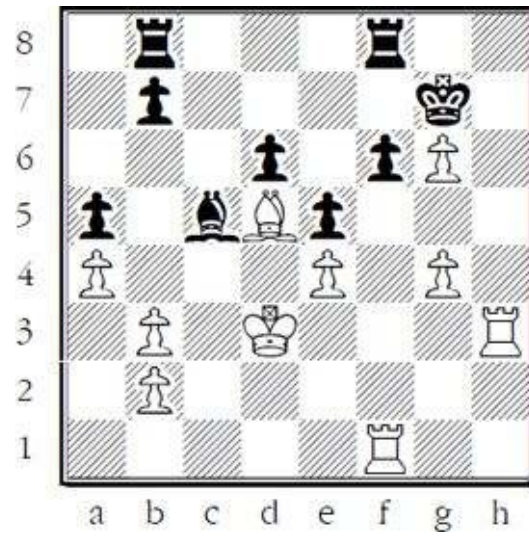
(40) Karpov vs. Mecking, 1971

White is even



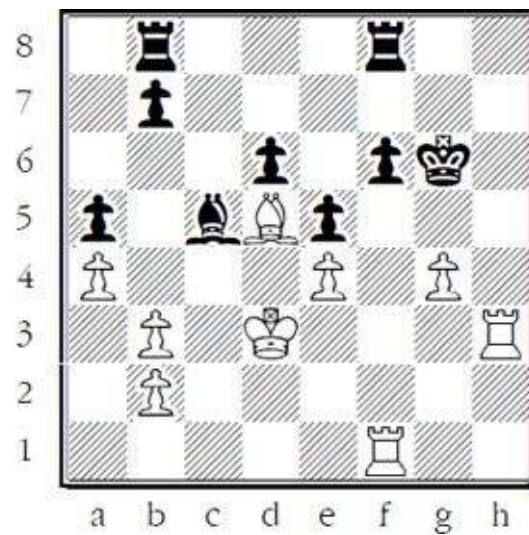
Both sides have five pawns, two rooks and a bishop, though the bishops travel on squares of different color. This gives chances to set up blockades, if one is playing for a draw, and chances to play for a win, if one has an attack. The idea is the other side can't break the attack by neutralizing the aggressive bishop. Thus, when attacking, it's like having an extra piece. That's too great an advantage for Karpov.

1.hxg6



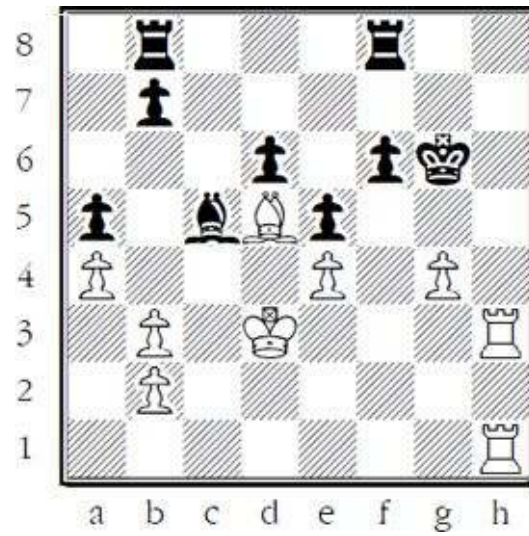
White opens the h-file.

1...Kxg6



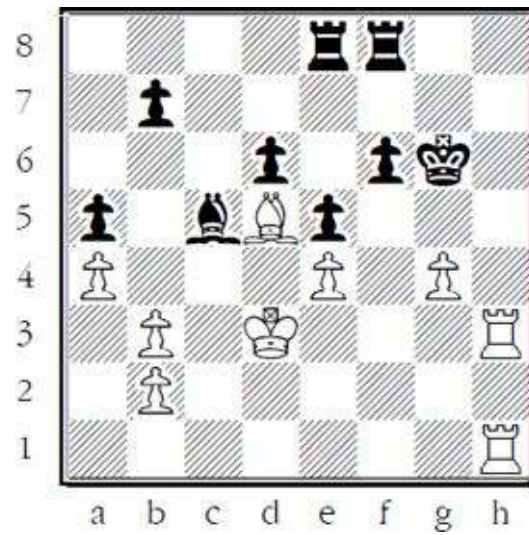
Black takes back, otherwise the pawn could be kept by Bd5-f7.

2.Rfh1



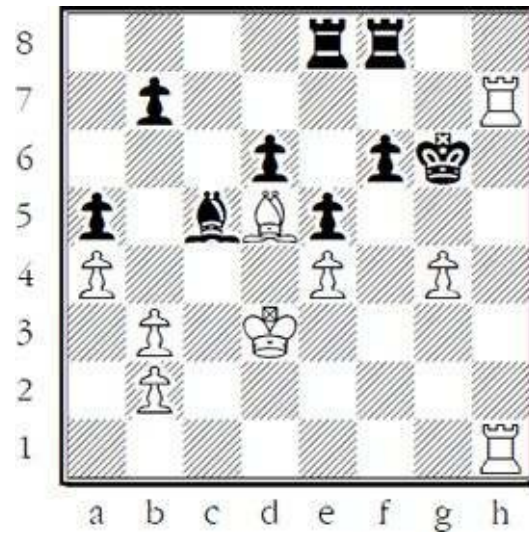
White doubles rooks, guaranteeing use of the h-file.

2...Rbe8



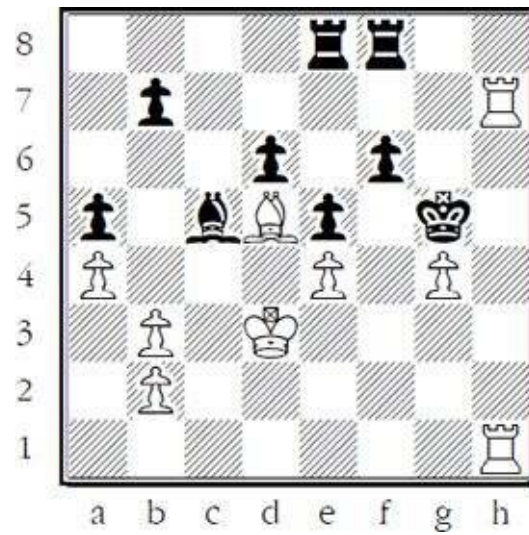
Black stops Bd5-e6, followed by Be6-f5+.

3.Rh7



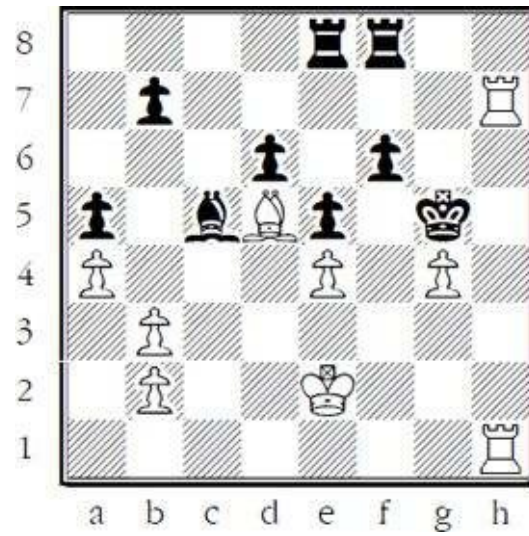
White seizes the seventh rank, cutting off Black's king.

3...Kg5



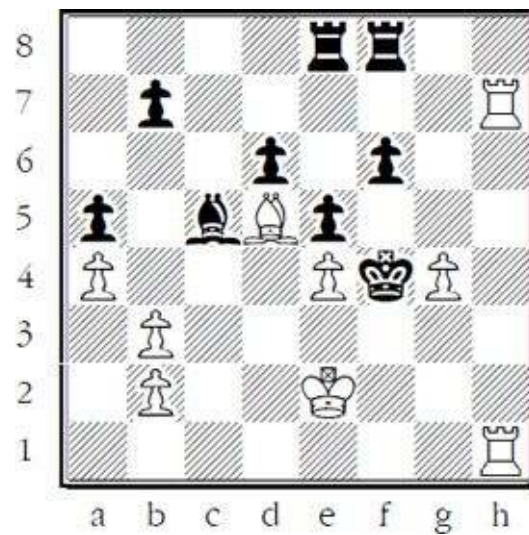
Black hopes to find shelter at f4.

4.Ke2



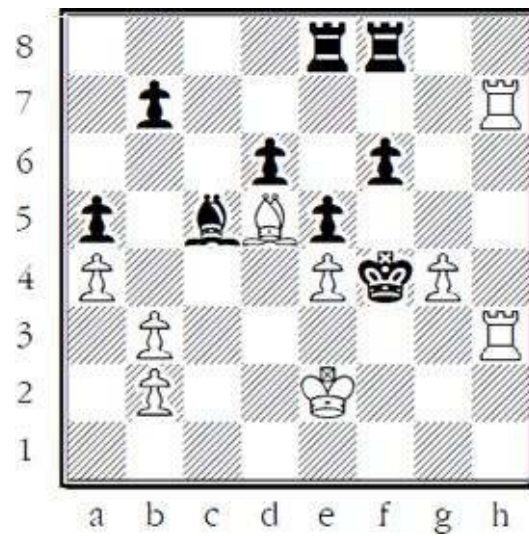
White's king guards f3. This might become important.

4...Kf4



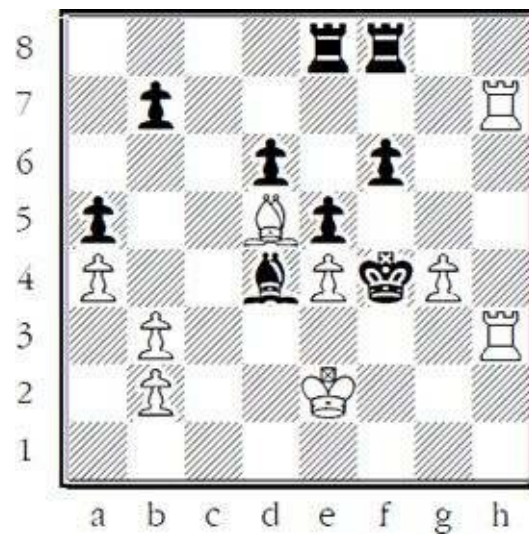
On 4...Kxg4??. White has 5.Rg7+ Kf4 6. Rh4 mate.

5.R1h3



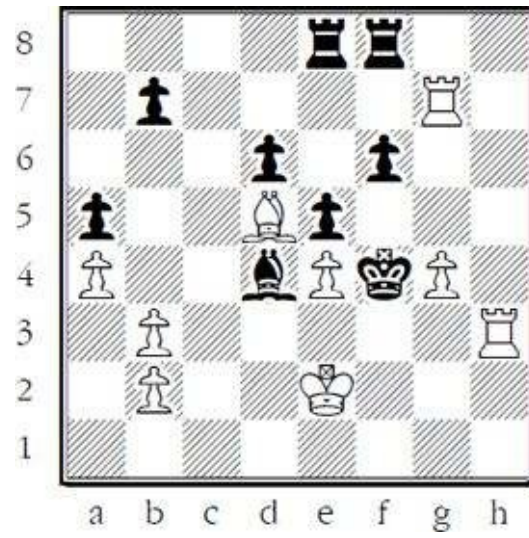
Is White threatening check at f3?

5...Bd4?



This meaningless attack on the b2-pawn cannot save Black.

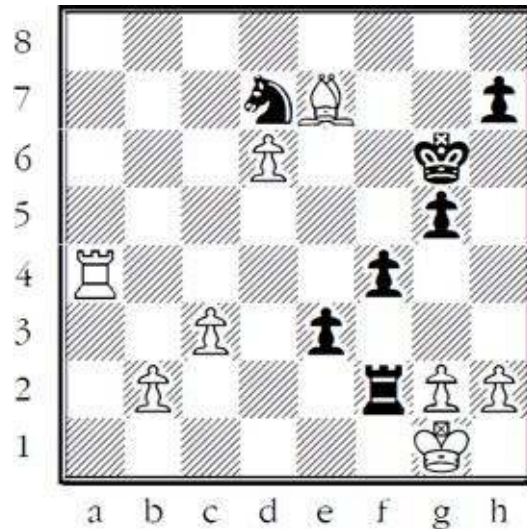
6.Rg7!



Not even a magician could stop mate next move. **(1-0)**

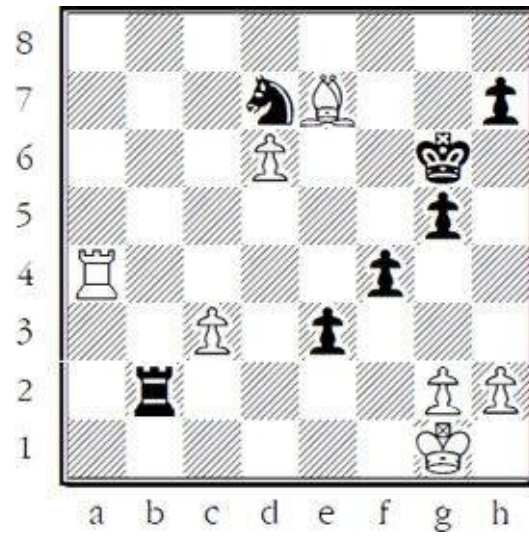
(41) Hamann vs. Gligoric, 1972

White is up a pawn



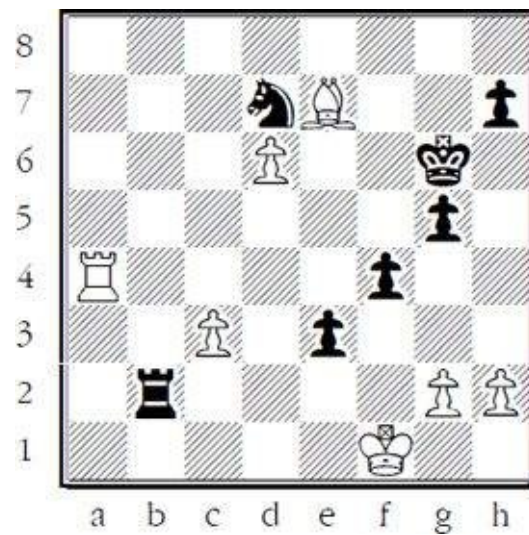
White is up a pawn, and it's a protected passed pawn at that. But it's blockaded, and the blockading piece is a knight, often ideal for such circumstances. Here it can move and attack and still keep an eye on the menacing pawn. Wait: there's something even worse for White. Black has a rook on the seventh rank. Rook, knight, and dangerous pawn – that's an awesome force, as Black soon demonstrates.

1...Rxb2



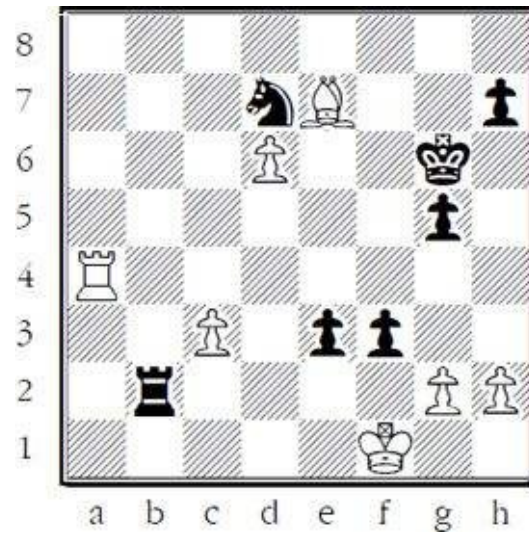
Black is able to capture a pawn and issue a mate threat. Can you blame him?

2.Kf1



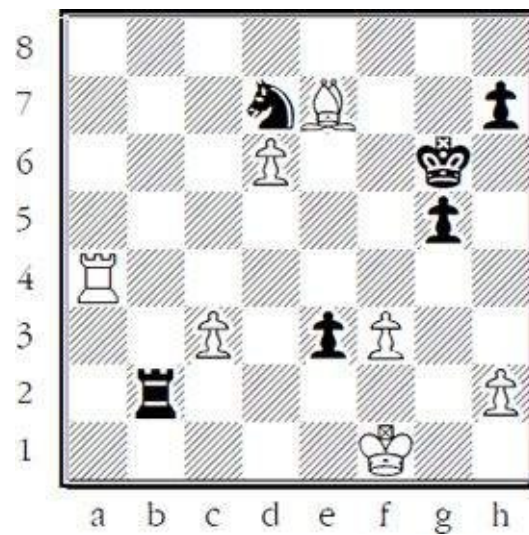
White realizes that mate is unpleasant, so he avoids it.

2...f3!



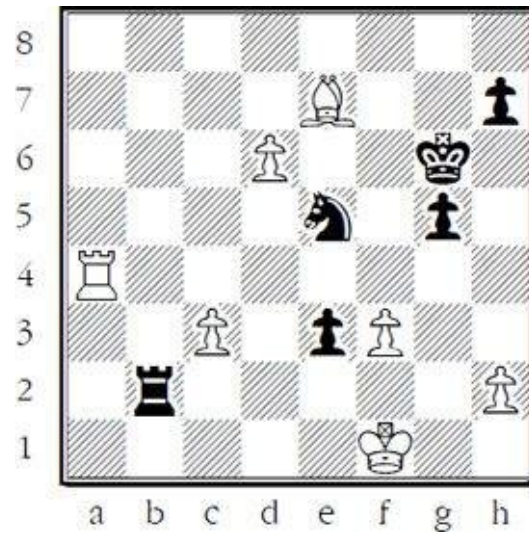
This is a nice move. It creates a fresh target and opens the seventh rank

3.gxf3



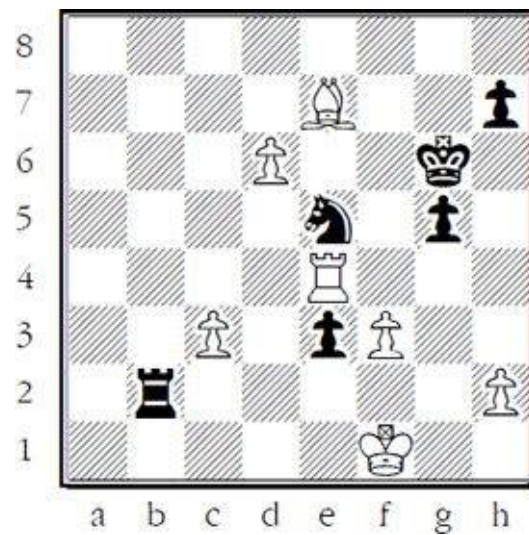
The pawn at f3 is now a potential target.

3...Ne5!



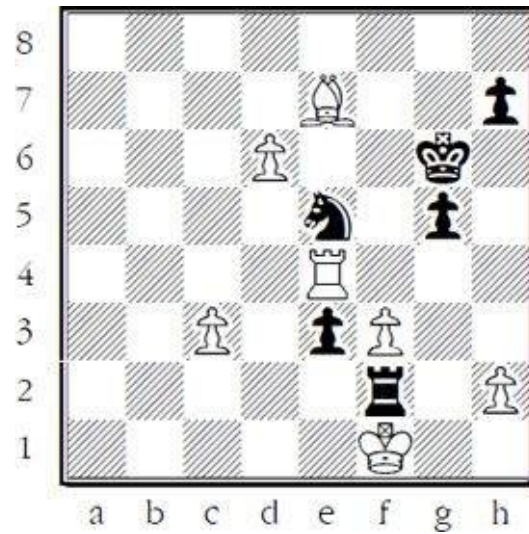
Still observing d7, the knight zeroes in on the fresh weakness.

4.Re4



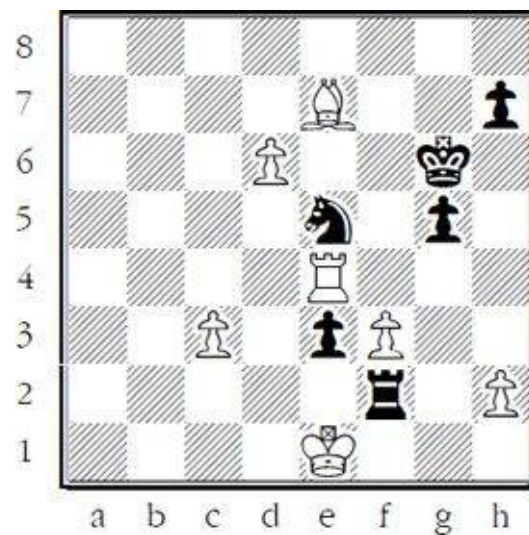
White tries to neutralize the e-pawn.

4...Rf2+



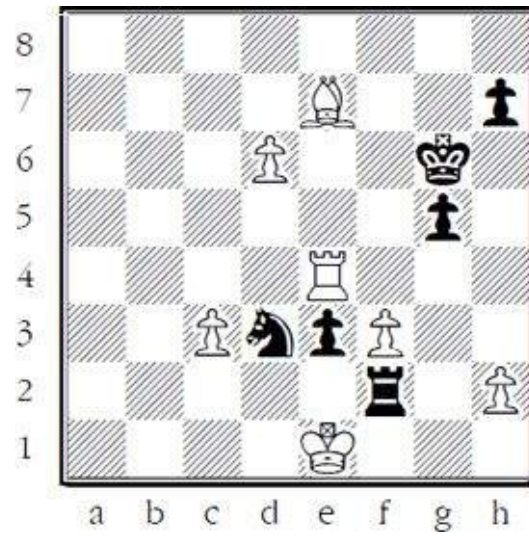
Black now has a winning series of checks, preventing White from defending himself.

5.Ke1



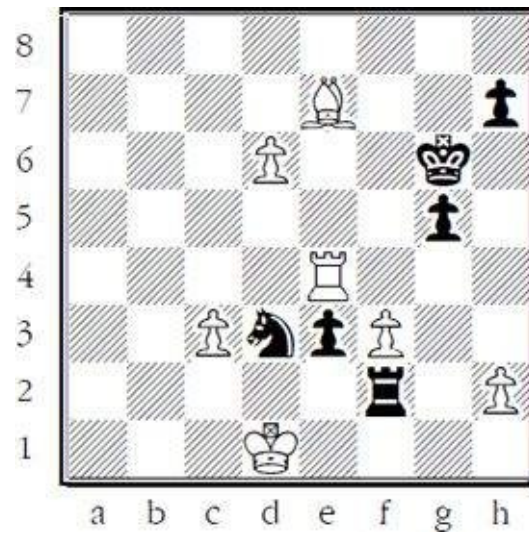
On 5.Kg1, there would have followed 5...Nxf3+ and mate next.

5...Nd3+



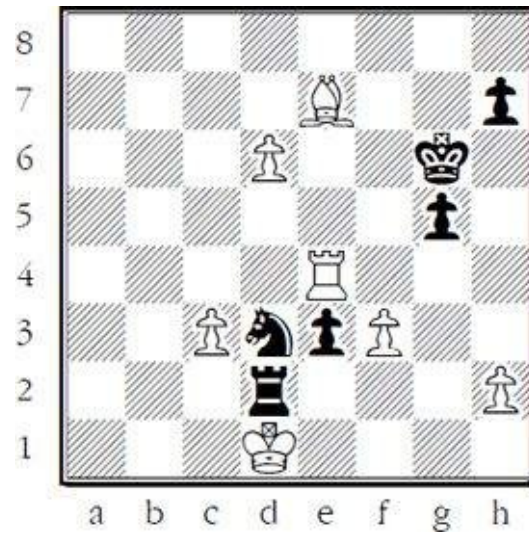
But this isn't any better. White still gets mated.

6.Kd1



Again, White had but one move.

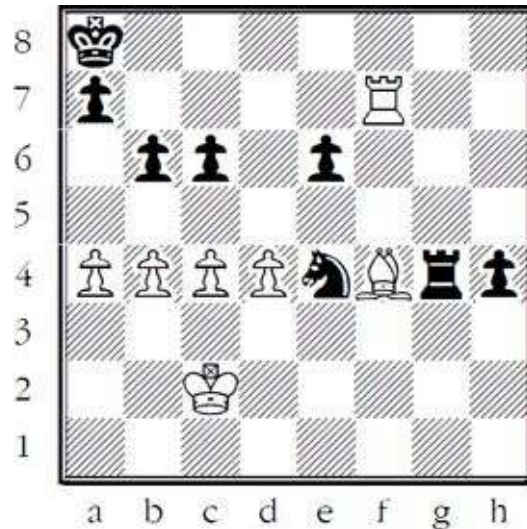
6...Rd2 mate.



In the end, the rook, knight, and dangerous pawn proved to be too much. There is nothing left to say. **(0–1)**

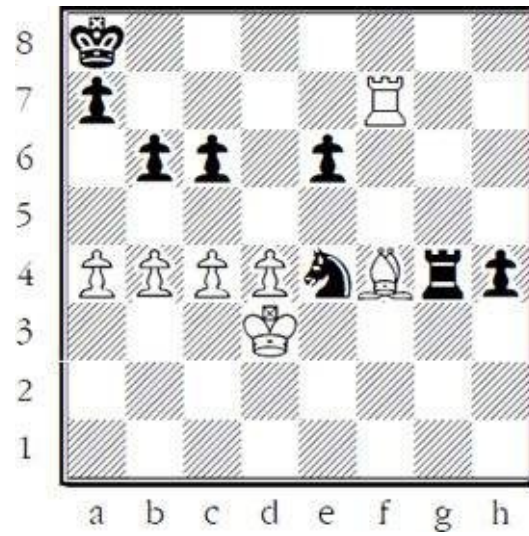
(42) Karpov vs. Pomar, 1974

White has a bishop for a knight and pawn



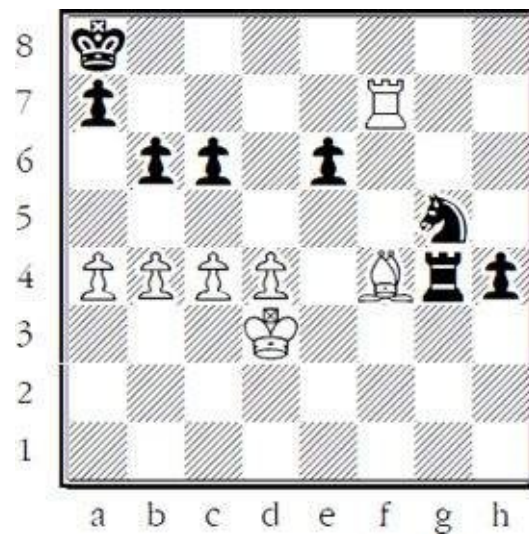
True, White is down a pawn in this rook and minor piece ending. But White's seventh rank rook posting, teamed with an active bishop, provide a complex of real compensation. How real? Well, when you add in White's queenside pawn front, it becomes so real that it's ideal. Let's see how Karpov untangles the web and weaves his spell.

1.Kd3



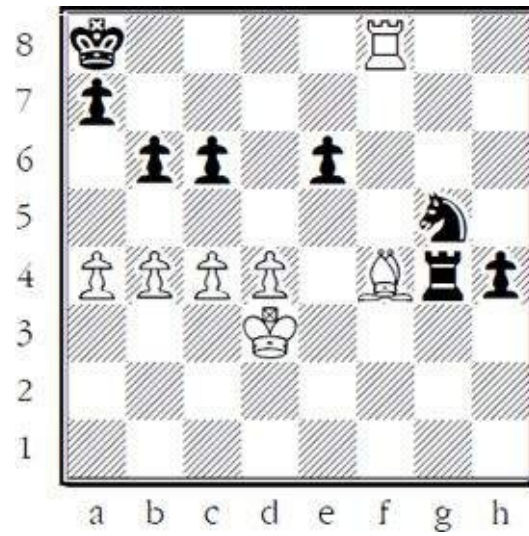
White activates the king and threatens the knight.

1...Ng5



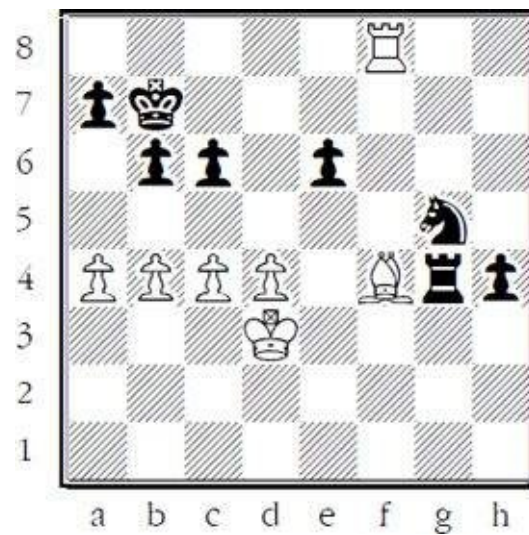
Black saves the knight with a gain of time.

2.Rf8+



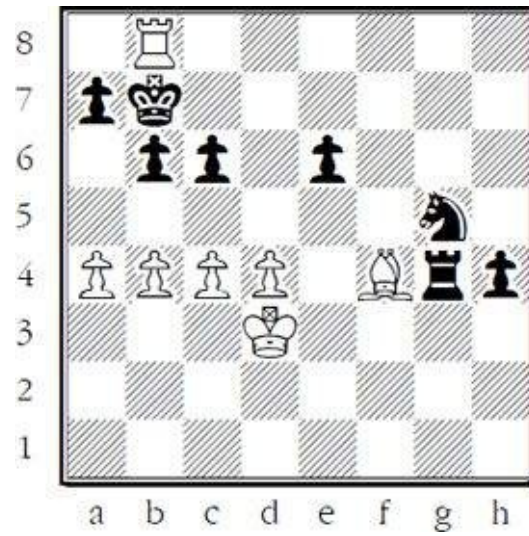
White abandons the seventh rank with purpose.

2...Kb7



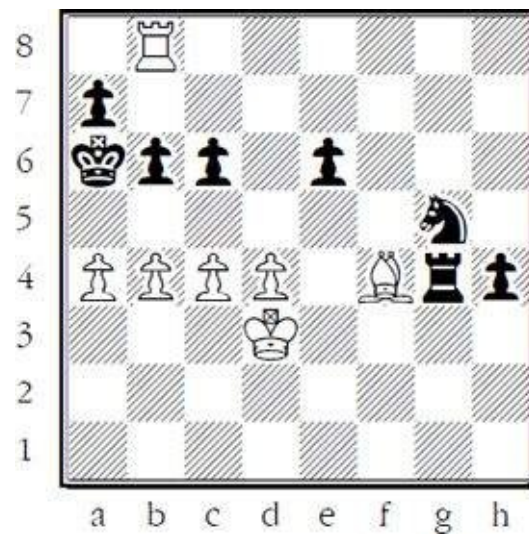
This was Black's only move.

3.Rb8+



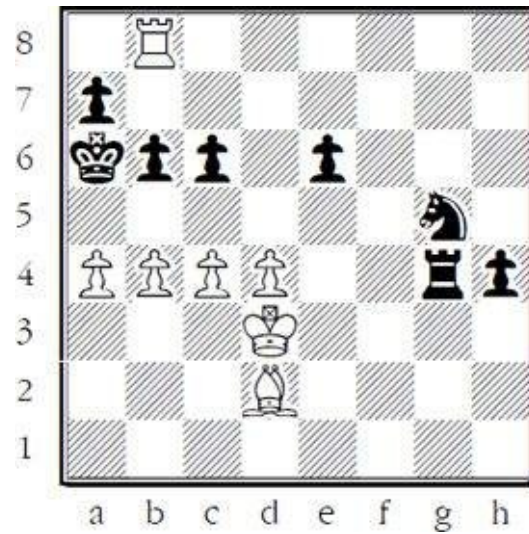
White forces Black's king uncomfortably to the edge.

3...Ka6



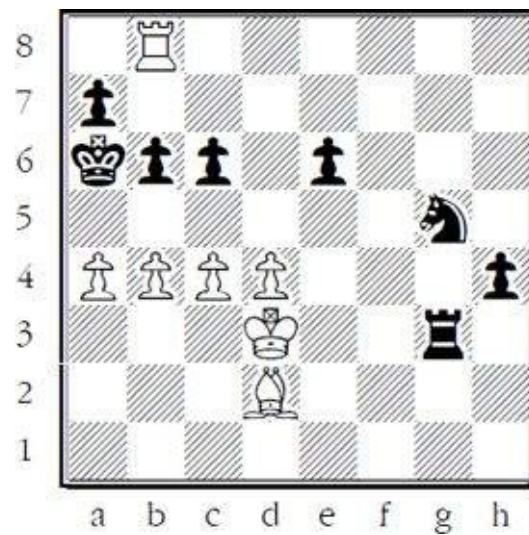
On 4.b5+ cxb5 5.axb5+ Ka5, Black's king escapes.

4.Bd2!



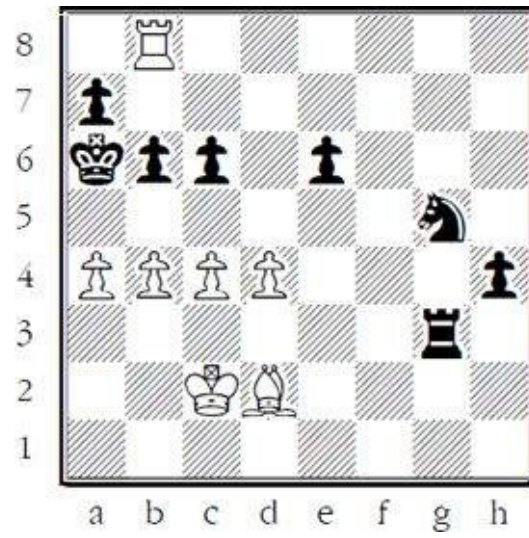
Here's the rub: White prevents the escape before checking.

4...Rg3+



This is what's called a last ditch check, since White's king is able to hide behind its bishop.

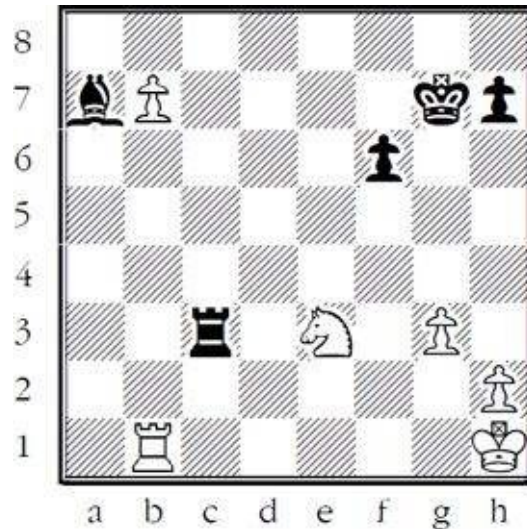
5.Kc2



Black resigns in view of 5...b5 6.axb5+ (or 6. cxb5+) and mate next move. **(1-0)**

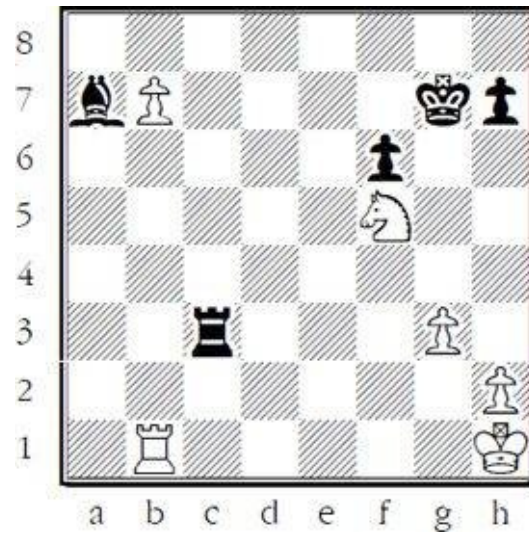
(43) Beliavsky vs. Sveshnikov, 1974

White is up a pawn



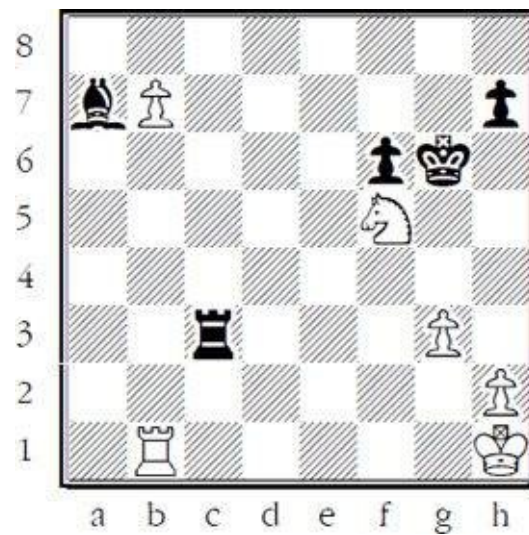
White's up a pawn, and he's threatening to promote, but his knight is hanging. If given a chance, perhaps Black will be able to blockade the advanced b-pawn. With an aggressively placed rook, maybe Black might get some counterplay. He almost does, but almost is seldom good enough, especially when the other player has the initiative and is a grandmaster.

1.Nf5+



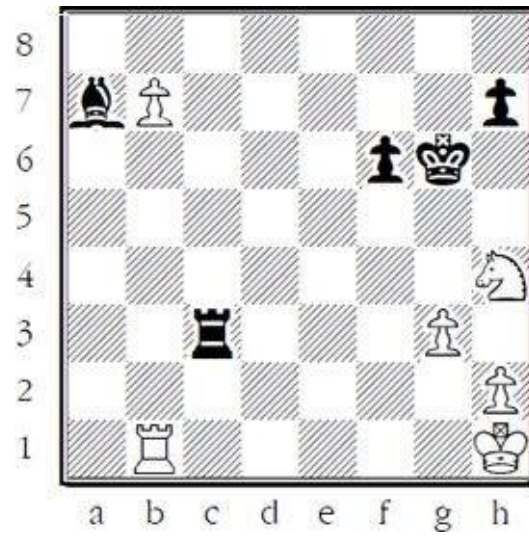
White tries to save the knight with a gain of time.

1...Kg6



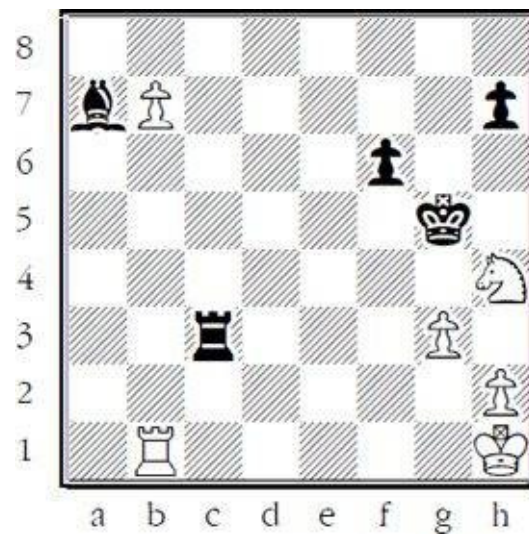
Black assails the knight again, hoping to gain some time back.

2.Nh4+



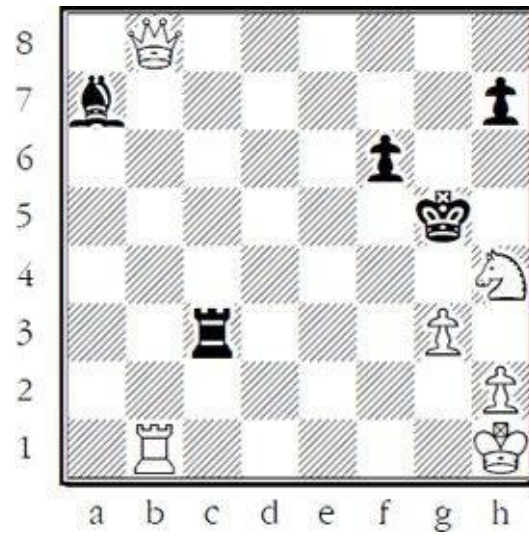
This check ensures that White will win a piece.

2...Kg5



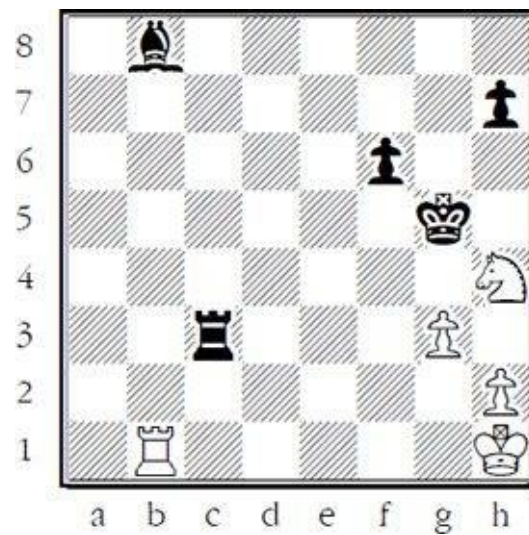
Black hopes in vain to manufacture counterthreats.

3.b8Q



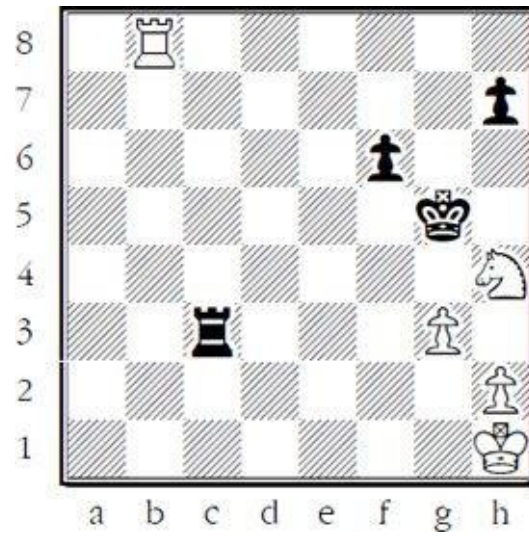
White forces Black's hand.

3...Bxb8



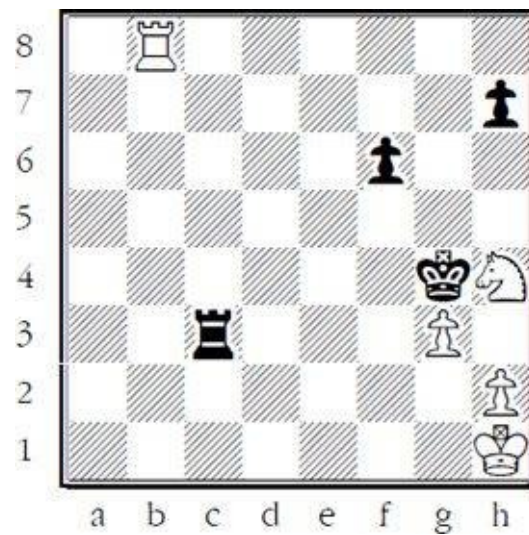
So Black must go down a piece.

4.Rxb8



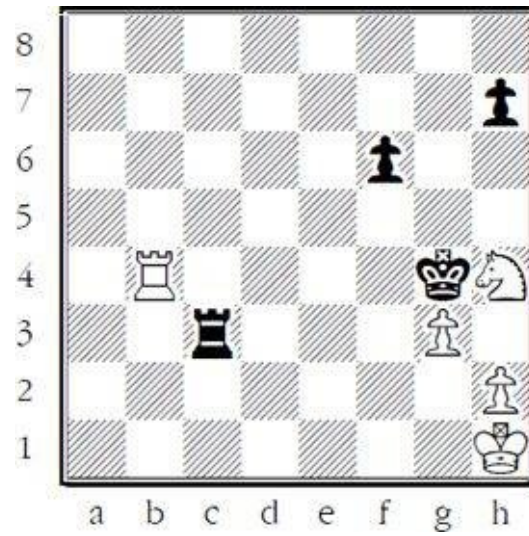
White gathers in his earnings. It should be merely a matter of time.

4...Kg4



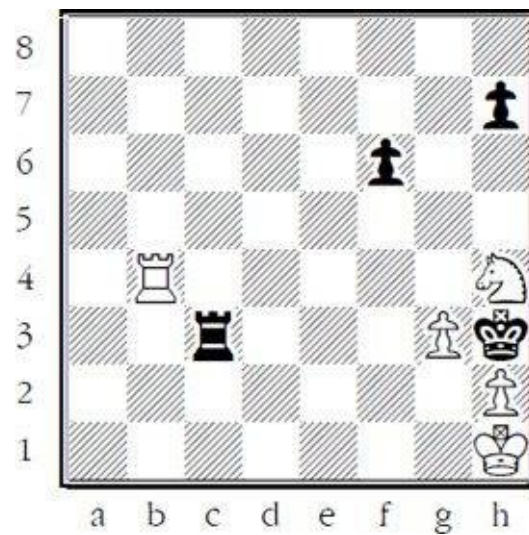
This action is something like walking into the lion's den.

5.Rb4+



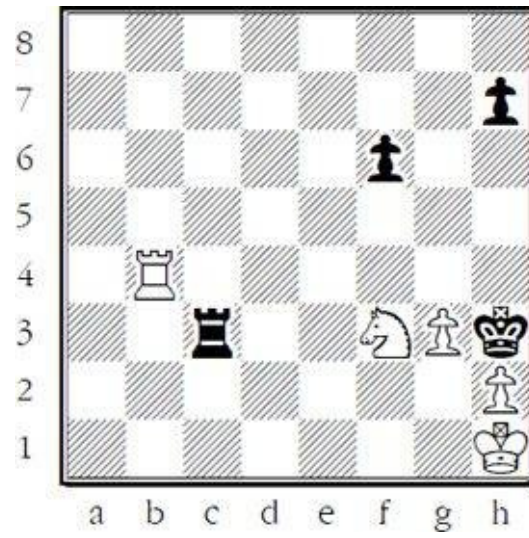
White effectively drives back the black king.

5...Kh3



We can't fault a losing king for trying.

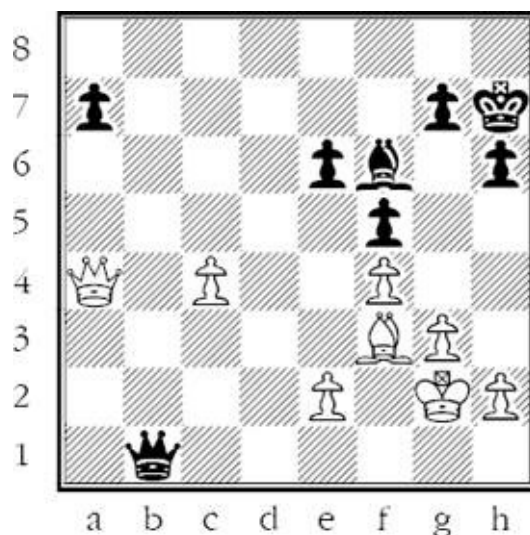
6.Nf3!



Nice move. Two mates are threatened, and that's one two many. **(1-0)**

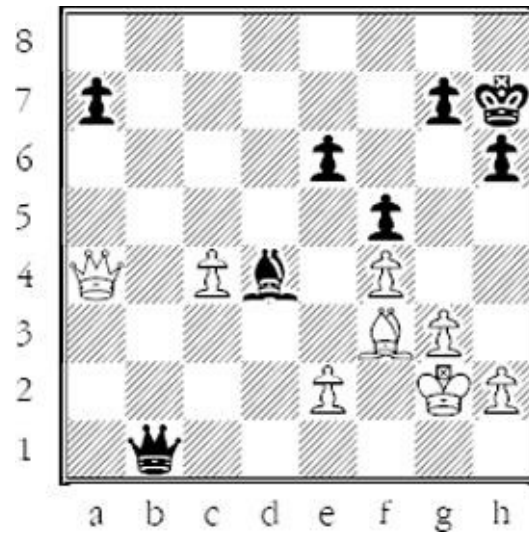
(44) Rizvonov vs. Kasparov, 1975

Black is even



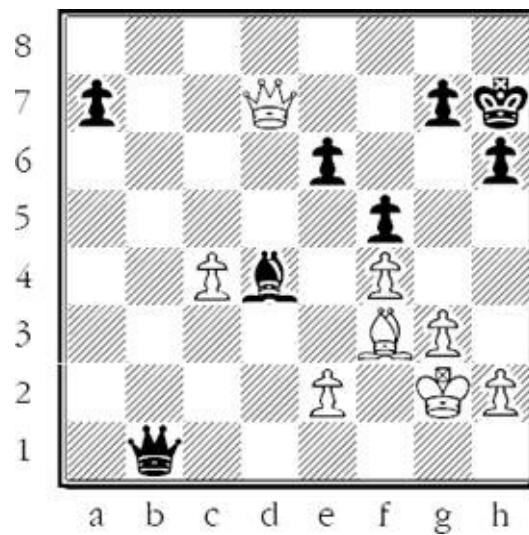
It's an ending with queens and bishops rampaging about. The bishops are of opposite color, which is an edge for the attacker, and Kasparov's queen seems bent on attack. Meanwhile, White's king is not all that safe, especially with Black's queen on the back rank. If the advanced queen gets some support, and Black finds a nice move or two, the game might suddenly end. Hey, that's what happens.

1...Bd4!



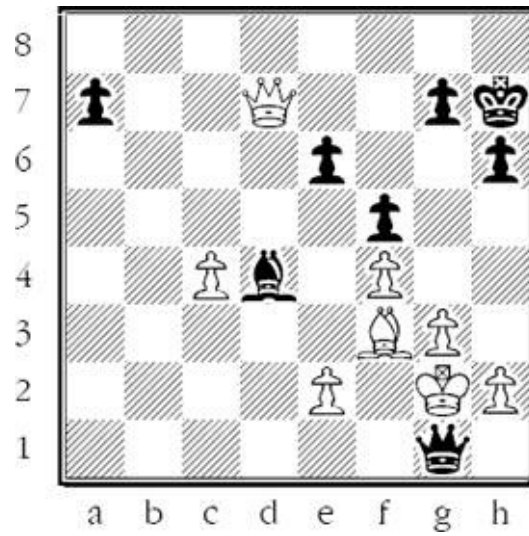
Black suddenly manifests real annoyance, threatening to check at g1.

2.Qd7



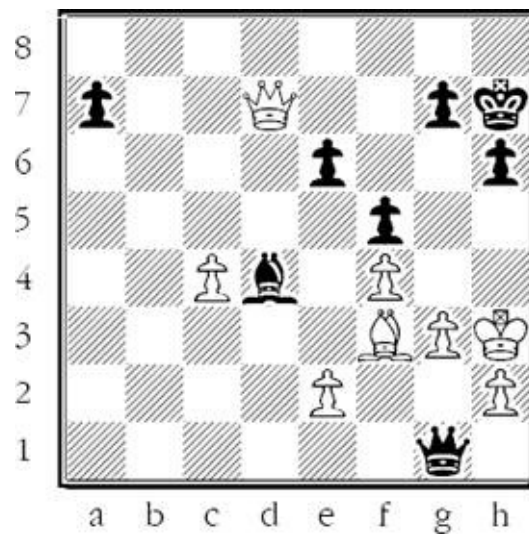
Unable to stop the check at g1, White tries for a little counterplay.

2...Qg1+



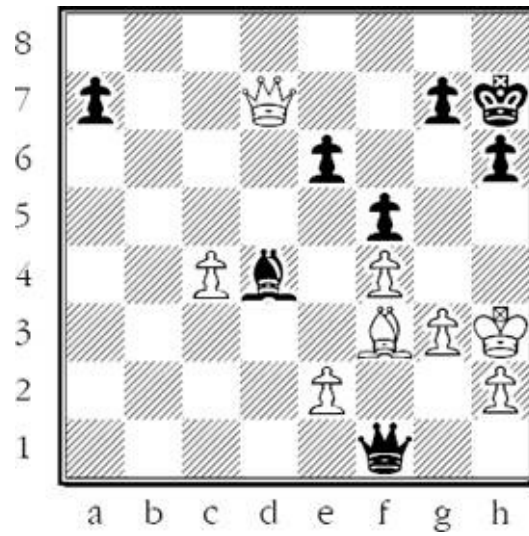
This drives White's king to the edge.

3.Kh3



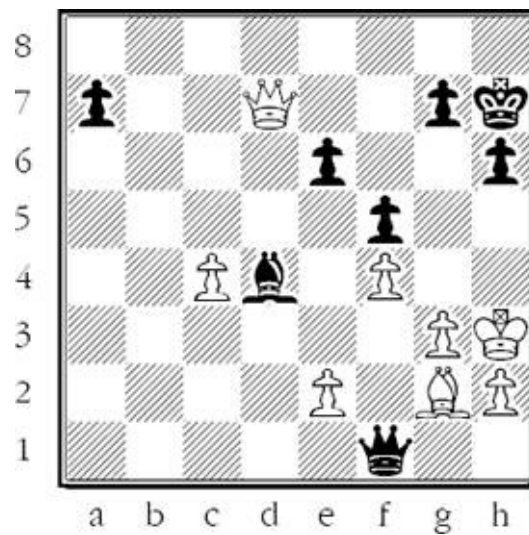
Clearly, White can't be comfortable with where his king is.

3...Qf1+



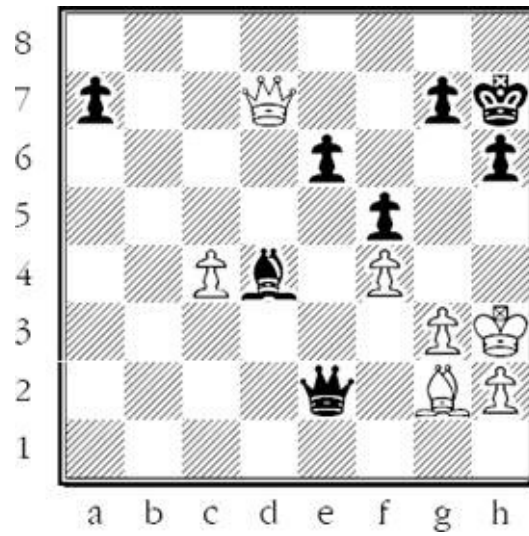
On 4.Kh4 Bf6+ 5.Kh5 Black has 5...Qh3 mate. That's a great thing to have.

4.Bg2



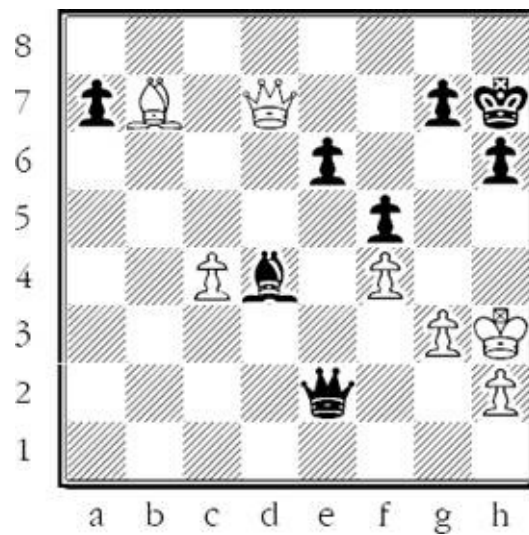
This is really the only practical move.

4...Qxe2!



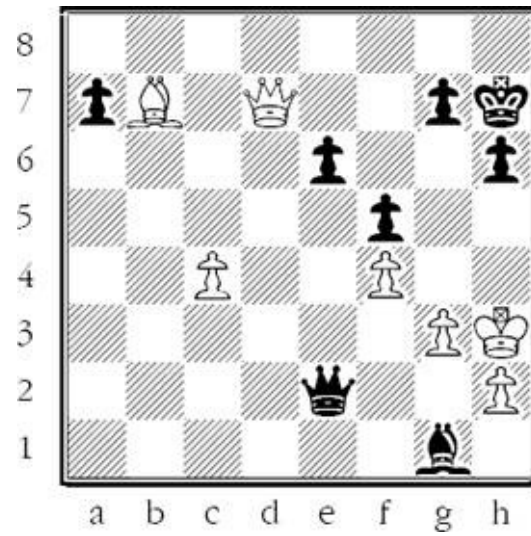
No need to defend d4, not when mate is menaced.

5.Bb7



White clears g2, expecting a check at h5 or g4.

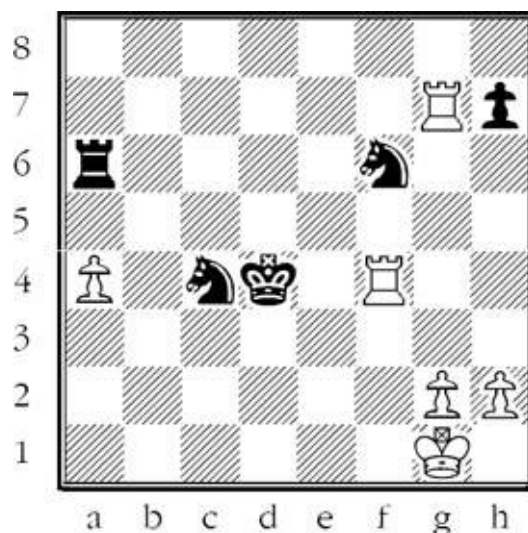
5...Bg1!



But this quiet invasion cannot be met. Other than sacking the queen to delay matters, White's day is over. **(0-1)**

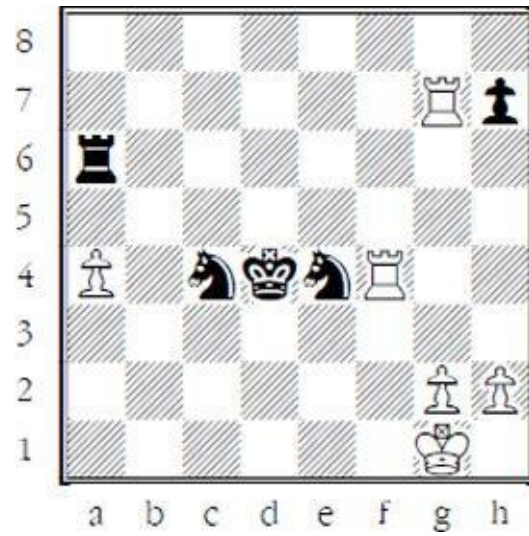
(45) Kortschnoi vs. Karpov, 1978

Black has two knights for a rook and two pawns



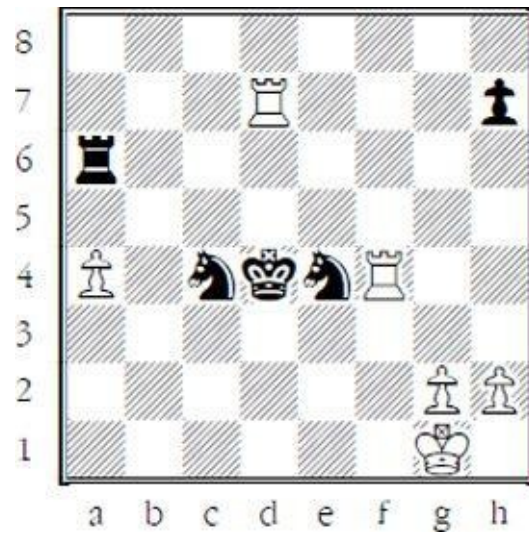
The position may be materially equal, but it's very definitely imbalanced, with Black having two knights for a rook and two pawns. It's hard to generalize in such situations, with the advantage hanging by specifics. The deciding factor here may be the placement of the two kings. Black's seems a little troubled, and White's has the appearance of relative okayness. But there's a rub here, and we don't need a genie to find it when we have Karpov.

1...Ne4



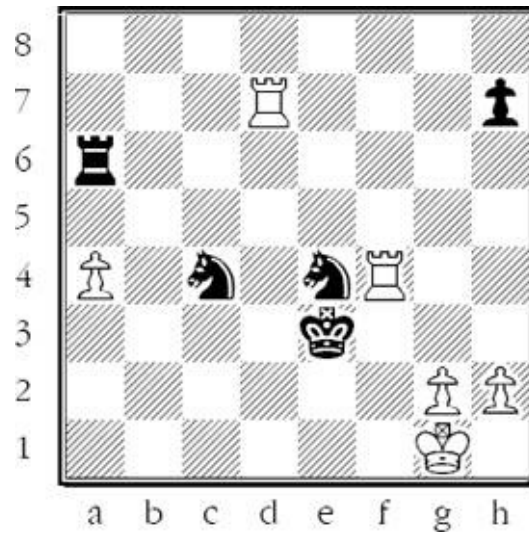
Otherwise, one of the knights is lost.

2.Rd7+



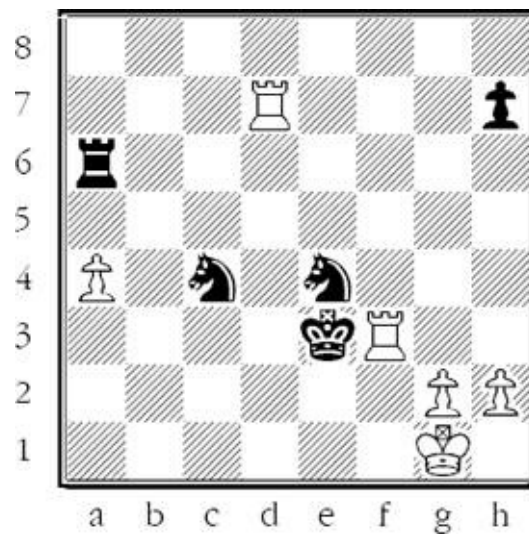
The rooks are pesky, but Black's pieces are centralized and together.

2...Ke3



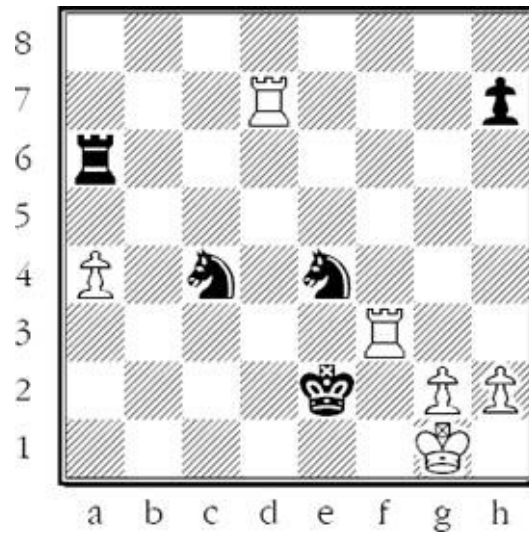
Black gets out of check with a gain of time.

3.Rf3+



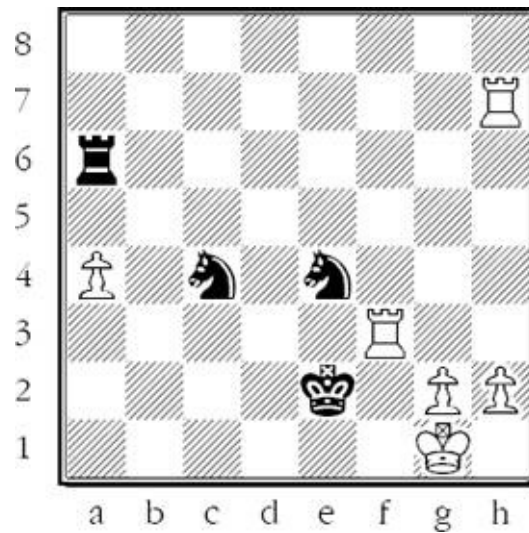
White gains back the tempo with check.

3...Ke2



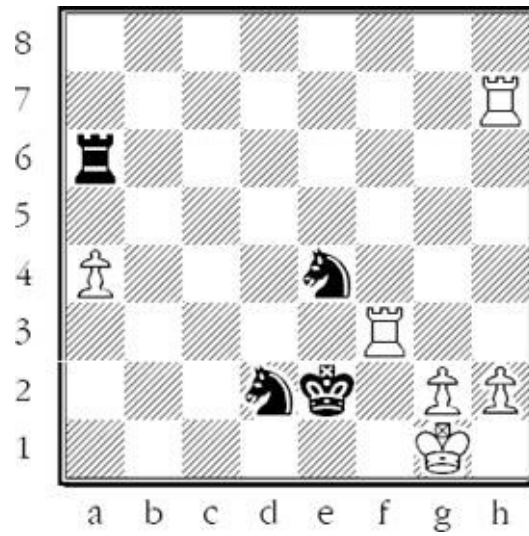
Don't look now, but Black's pieces are starting to be annoying.

4.Rxh7



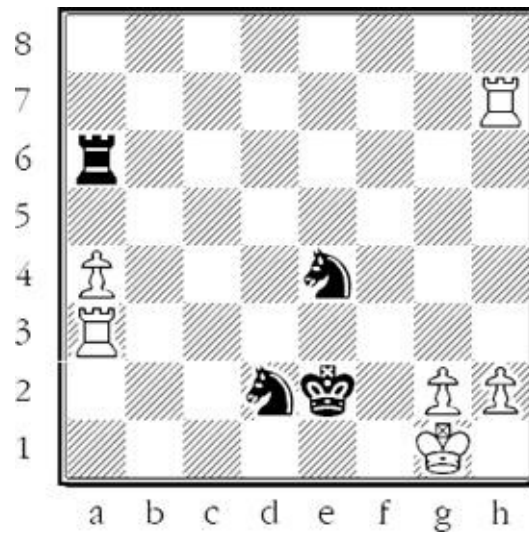
If White gets the time, his two connected pawns could prove promising.

4...Ncd2!



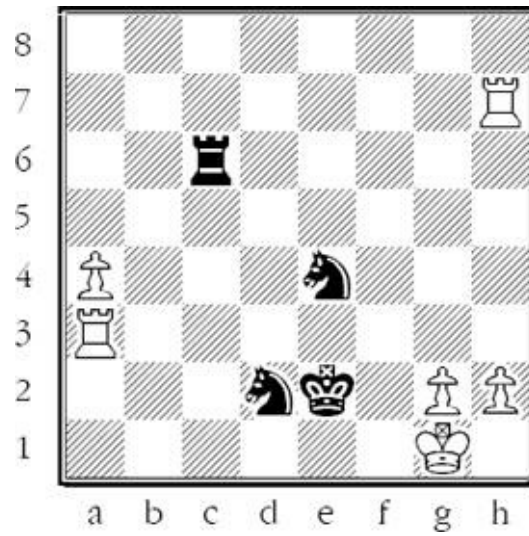
This is a nice defensive move, and it also contains a dash of poison.

5.Ra3



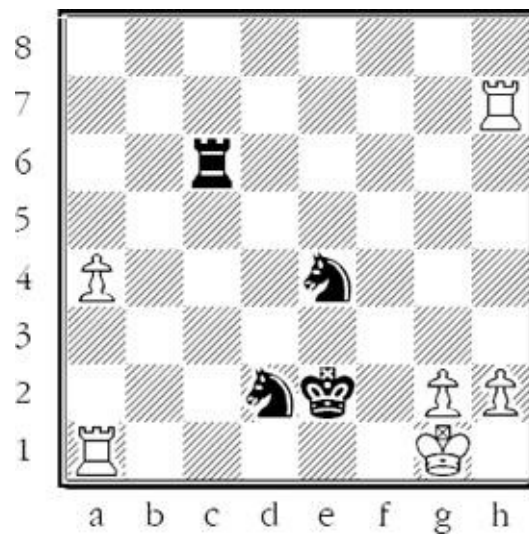
White saves the rook and guards the a-pawn.

5...Rc6



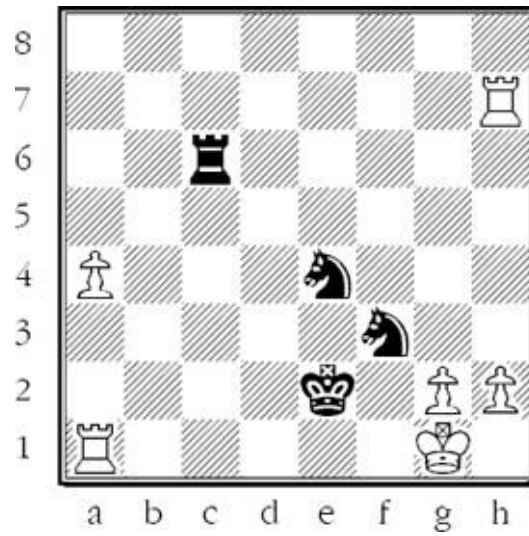
Just like that, Black menaces mate.

6.Ra1



White stops the mate at c1, but it's not good enough.

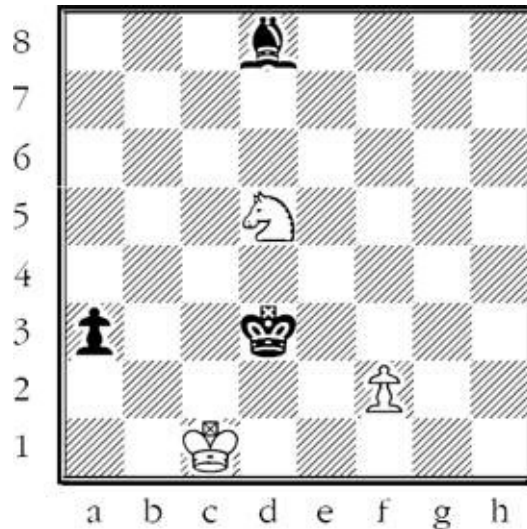
6...Nf3+!



It's mate in two moves: 7.gxf3 (or 7. Kh1 Nf2 mate) Rg6+ 8.Kh1 Nf2 mate. **(0–1)**

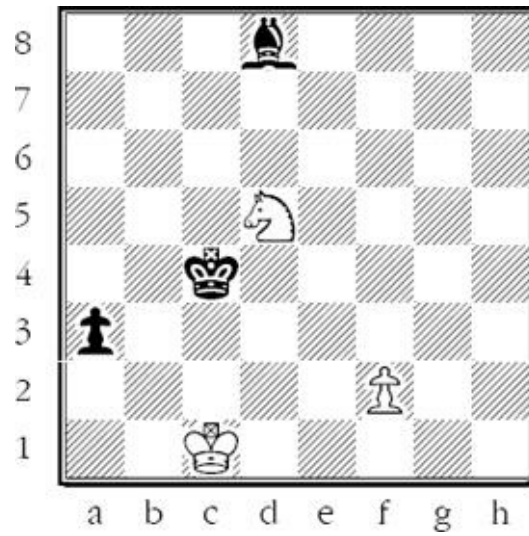
(46) Arnasson vs. Kasparov, 1980

Black has a bishop for a knight



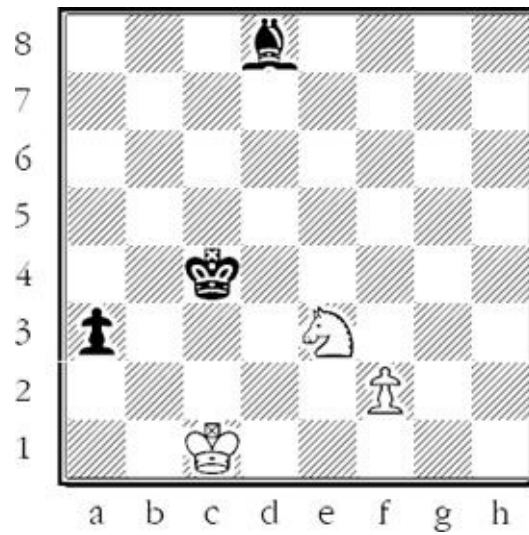
Here we have a very basic ending of bishop and pawn vs. knight and pawn, with the pawns being on opposite sides of the board. Clearly, Black's king is superior to White's. And though the knight is centralized, it's going to have trouble contending with the a-pawn. Rook-pawns tend to be inferior, but not when facing off against knights. Knights often falter as they approach the edge. Sometimes they fall off the board.

1...Kc4



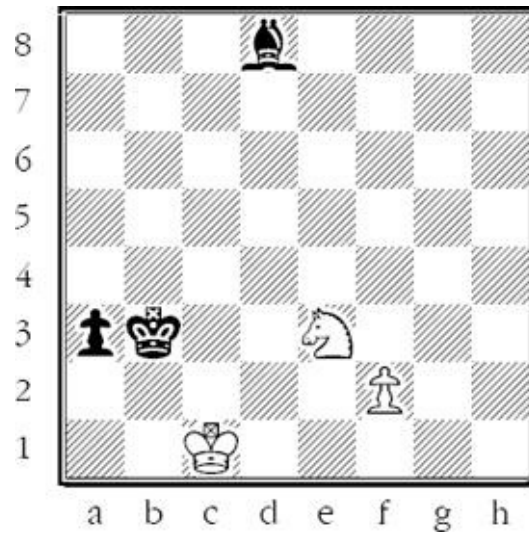
This time-gainer prevents an attempt at blockade.

2.Ne3+



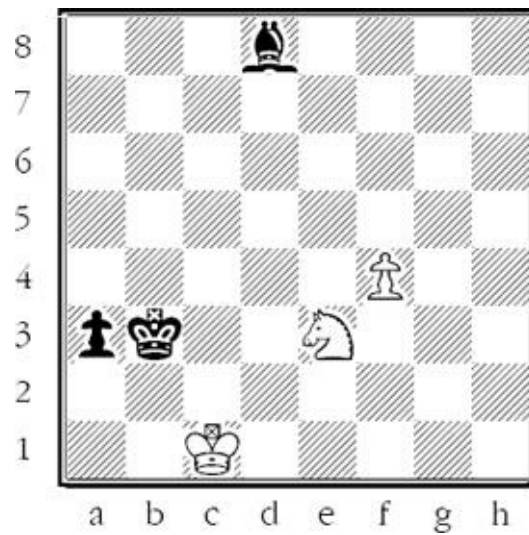
White uses the check to save the knight and catch his breath.

2...Kb3



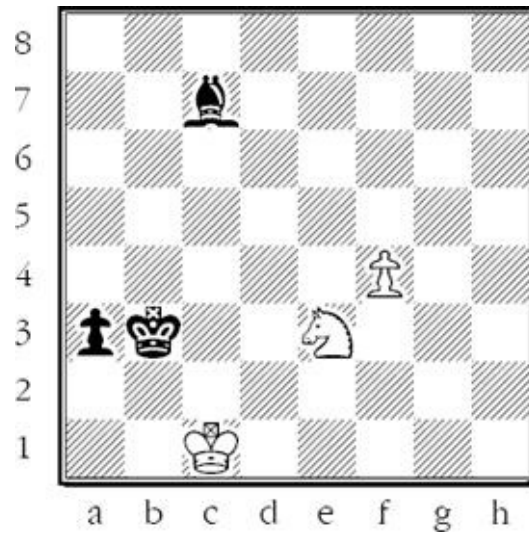
The pawn is ready to advance. Also, Black's king can't be checked for at least two moves.

3.f4



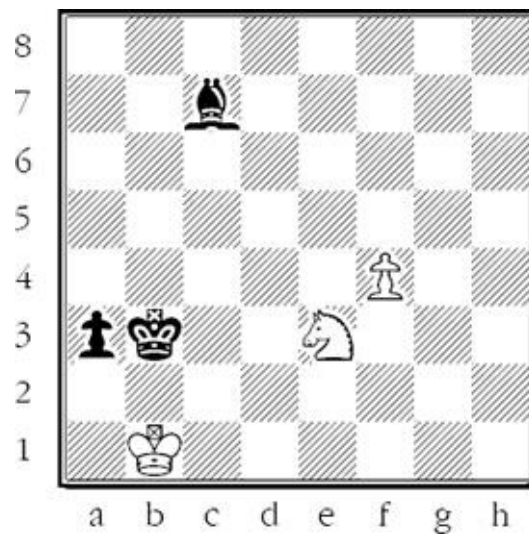
White tries to manufacture a counter-threat.

3...Bc7



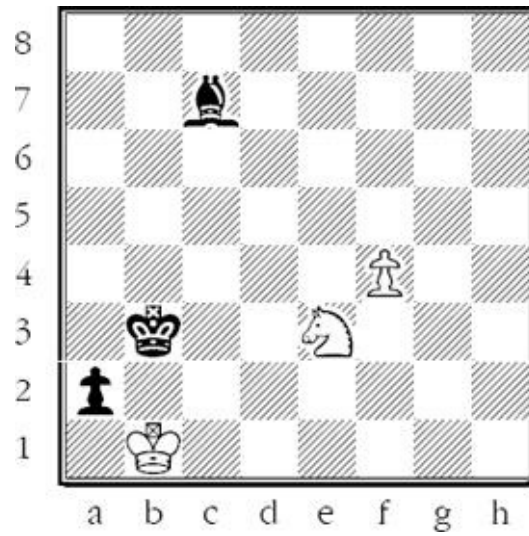
Black attacks the pawn to find the right squares for the bishop.

4.Kb1



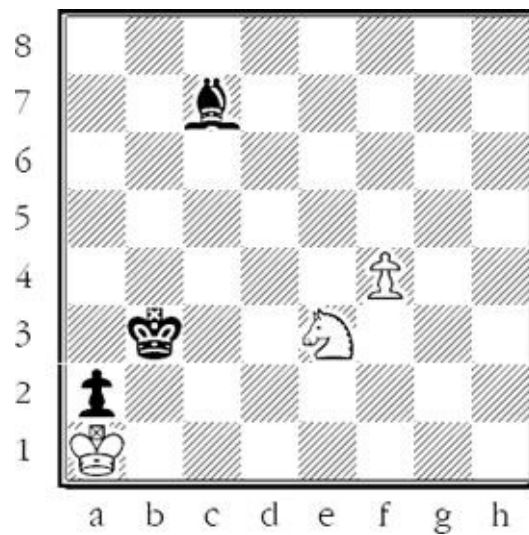
White gets his king off the dark squares.

4...a2+



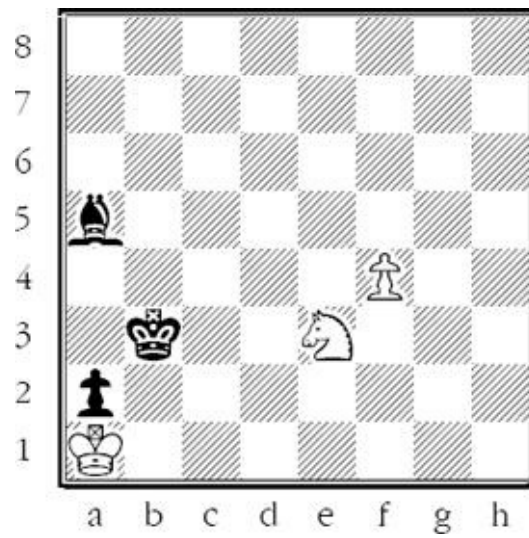
This forces White's hand. The king must go to a1.

5.Ka1



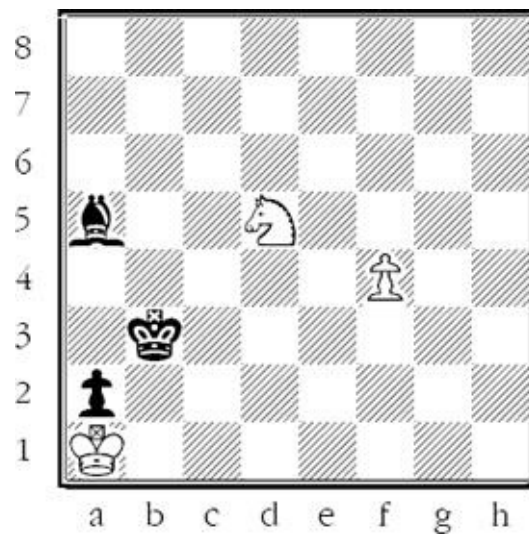
Now Black looks to find a way to check White's king.

5...Ba5



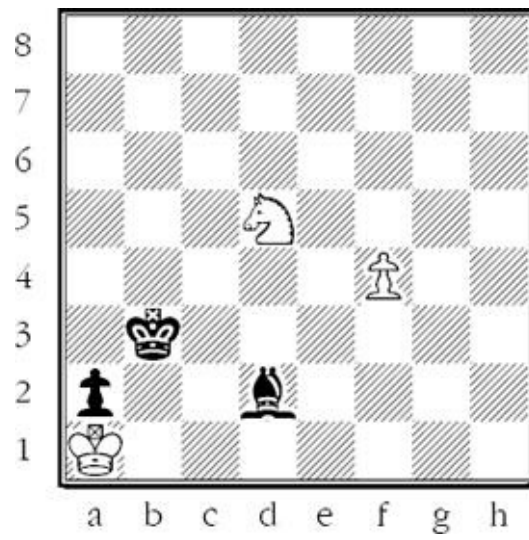
On 6.Nd1, Black has 6...Bb6 or 6...Bd8, but not 6...Bc7 7.Nc3!.

6.Nd5



Now 6...Bd8 fails to 7.f5.

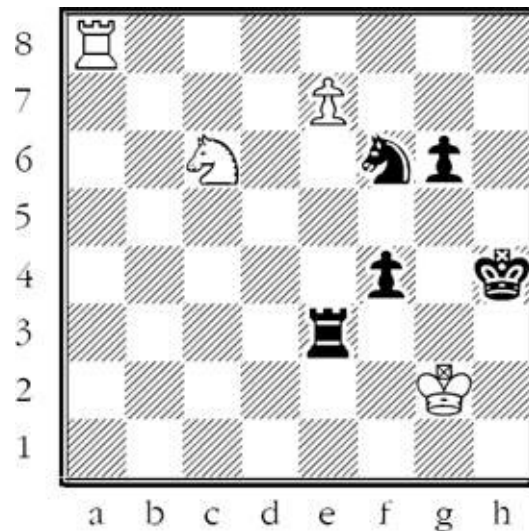
6...Bd2!



This is decisive. White has no answer to the threat of 7...Bc1. **(0-1)**

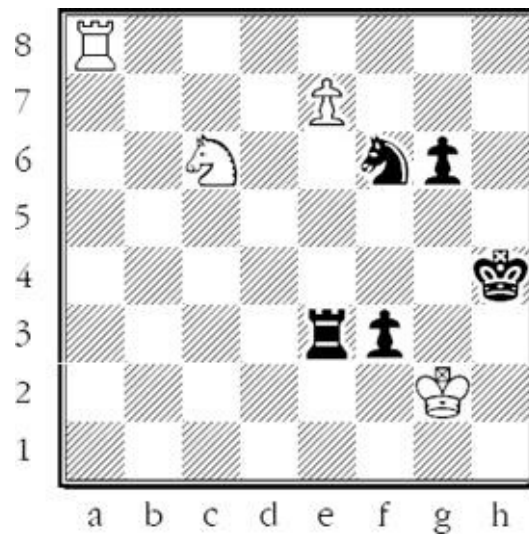
(47) Larsen vs. Kasparov, 1983

Black is up a pawn



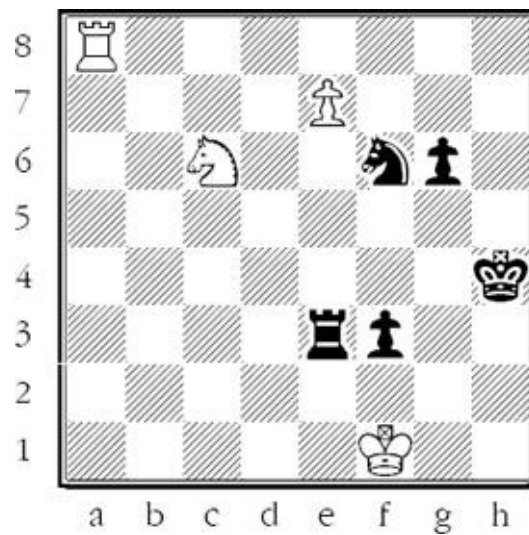
Black's ahead by a pawn but White has his sights on making a new queen, if ever it can happen. This possibility must be kept in mind. Presently, it is White who must contend with the more serious threats. Black has an armada afloat on the kingside. Larsen tries to fend off the invasion, of course, but Kasparov is irrepressible in attack. He makes sure not to crash on any rocks.

1...f3+!



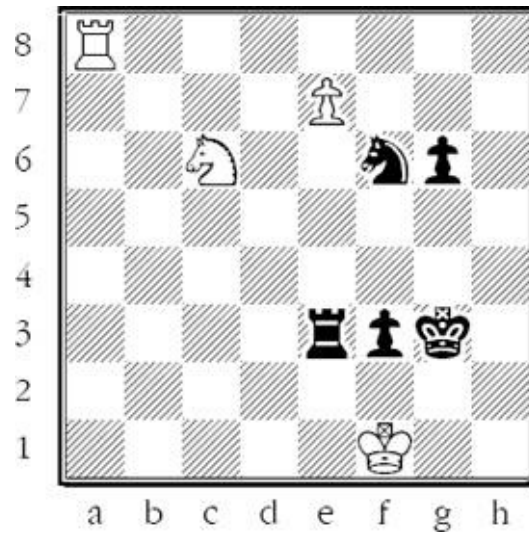
This is a strong move, in that 2.Kf2 is squelched by 2...Ng4+.

2.Kf1



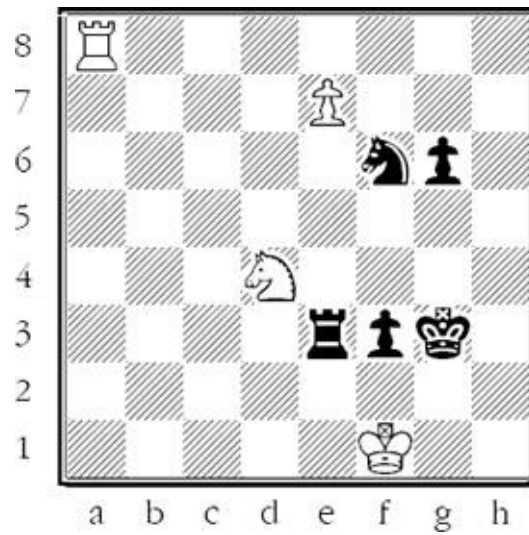
White's king protects the home rank.

2...Kg3



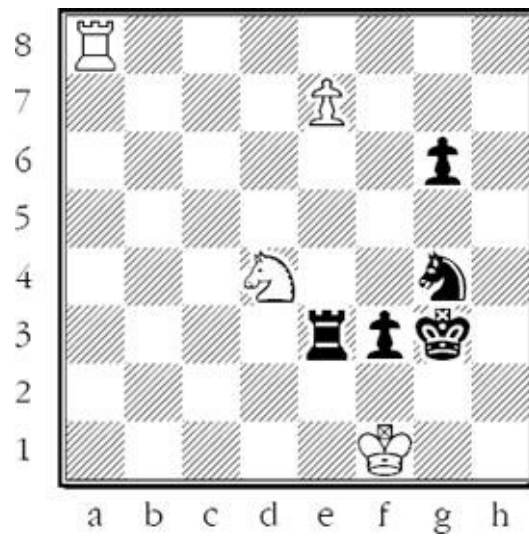
Mate possibilities are starting to arise.

3.Nd4



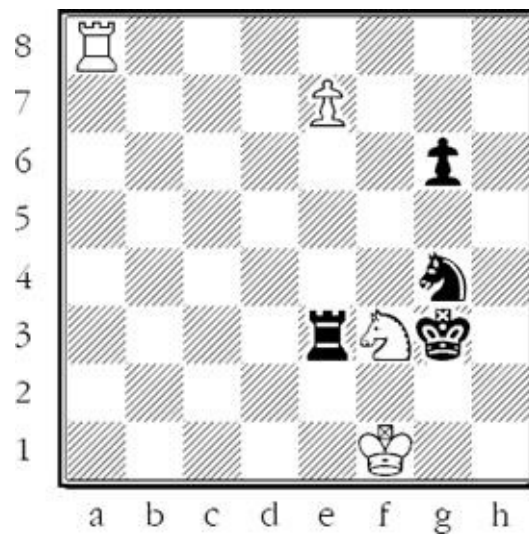
On 3...Rxe7 White has 4.Ra3.

3...Ng4



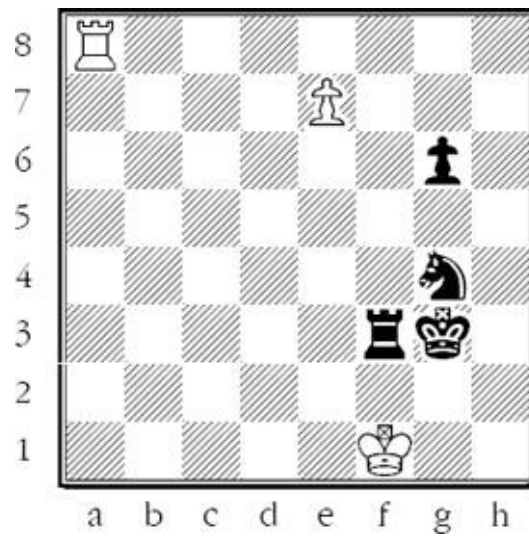
Here we go: The threat is 4...Nh2+.

4.Nxf3



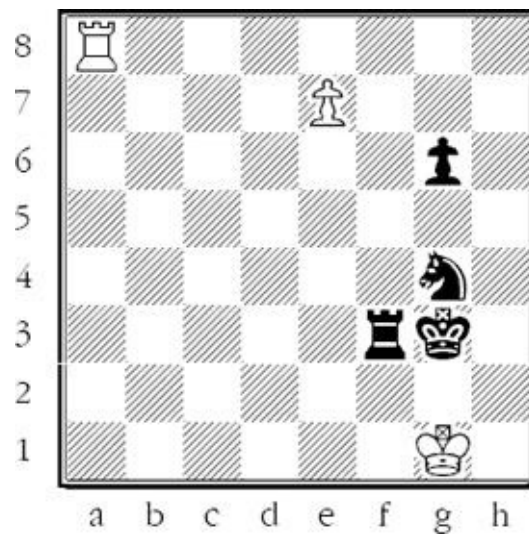
White hopes for 4...Kxf3 6.e8/Q.

4...Rxf3+



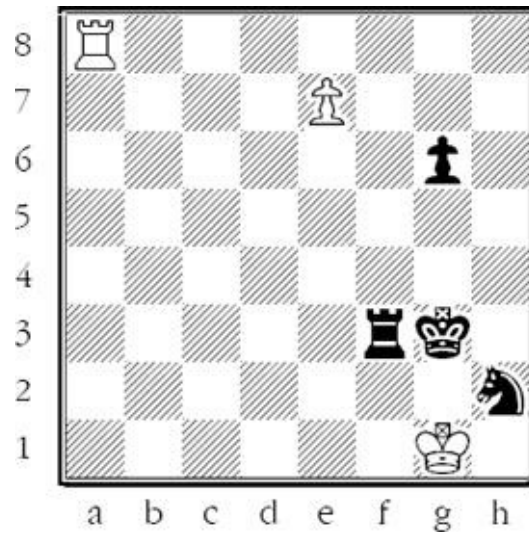
If now White moves to the e-file, Black wins the e7-pawn.

5.Kg1



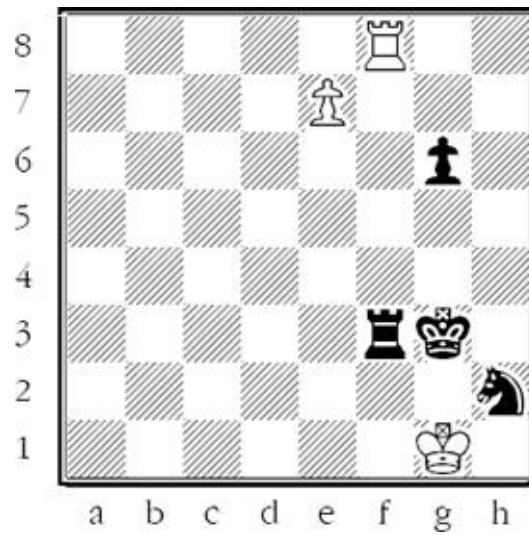
White still hopes to promote in time.

5...Nh2!



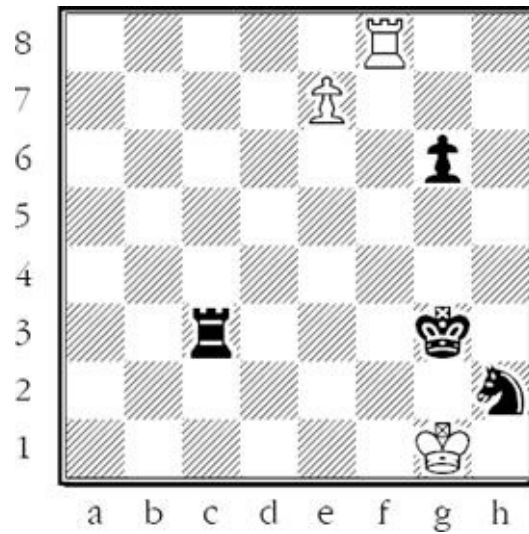
Once again, Black menaces mate, this time at f1.

6.Rf8!



This is a good try. White guards f1 in x-ray.

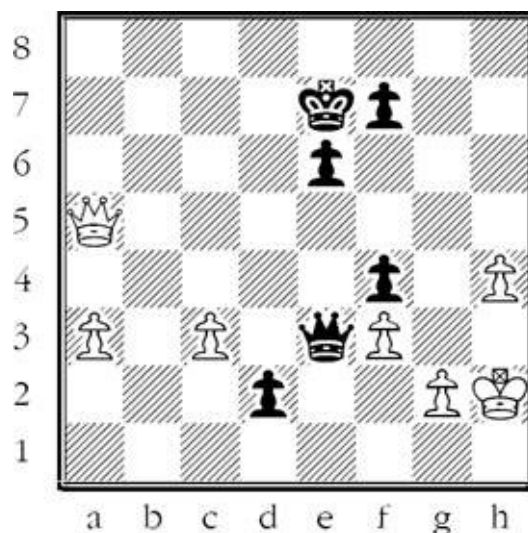
6...Rc3!



The same notion applies after moving the rook to a3, b3, or d3. If White promotes, he gets mated. And if 7.Rf1, Black has 7...Re3. Black wins the e-pawn and then mates in a few moves. **(0-1)**

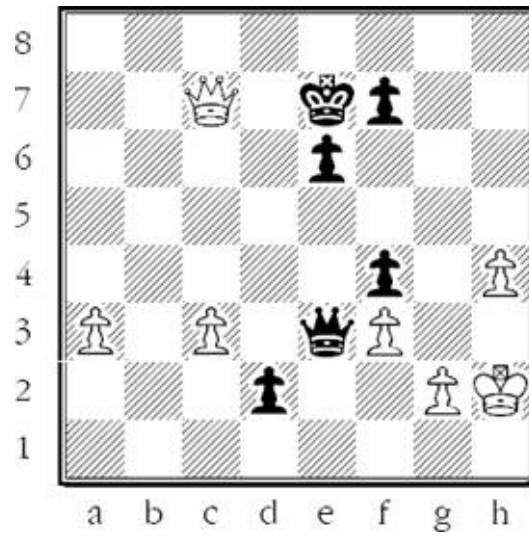
(48) Rogers vs. Kortschnoi, 1986

White is up a pawn



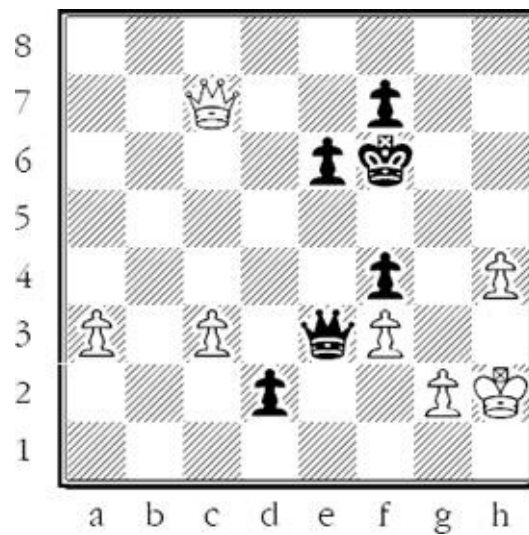
In this tricky queen ending, White is up a pawn, but Black has a dangerous passed pawn at d2. Still, White has the move, and probably at least a perpetual check, assuming nothing strange happens. Well, something strange does happen, but not to White. In trying too hard to win, Black finds a surprising way to lose. Well, it's a queen ending, so maybe it's not that surprising after all.

1.Qc7+



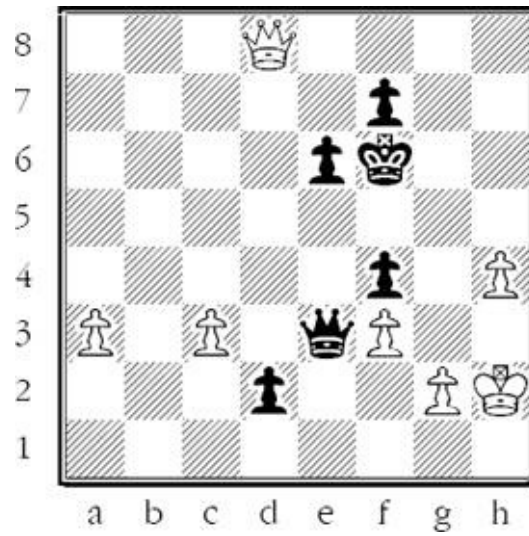
With Black menacing promotion, White starts checking.

1...Kf6



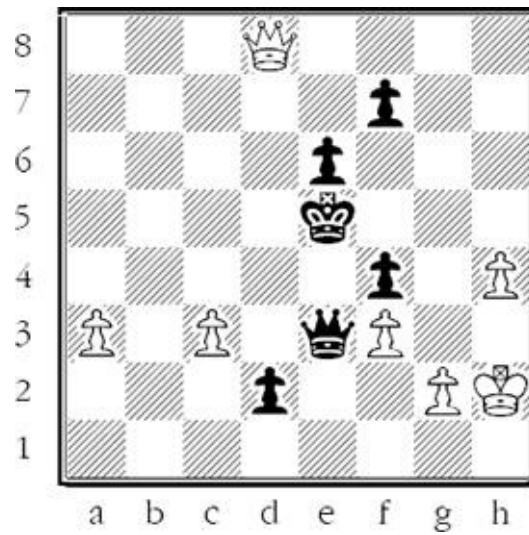
On 1...Kf8 White has 2.Qd8+ Kg7 3. Qg5+ with a draw in hand.

2.Qd8+



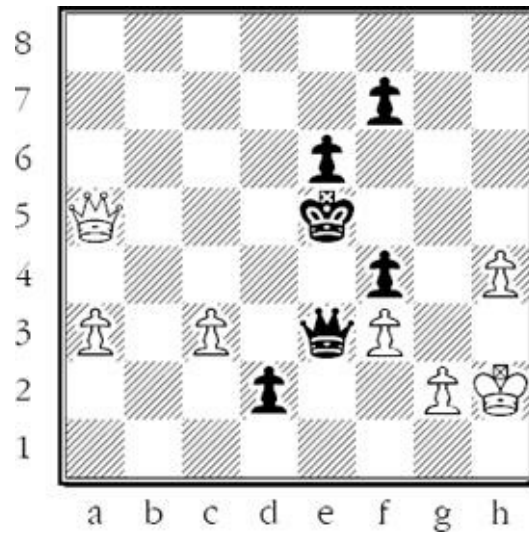
White's queen annoys the enemy king and gets in line to stop promotion.

2...Ke5



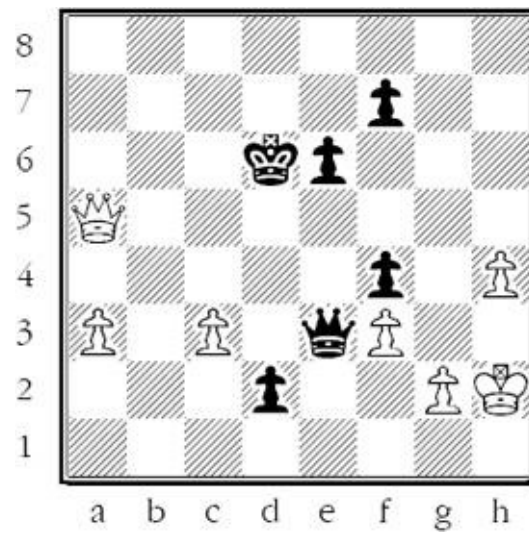
The blunder 2...Kf5?? fails to 3.Qg5 mate.

3.Qa5+



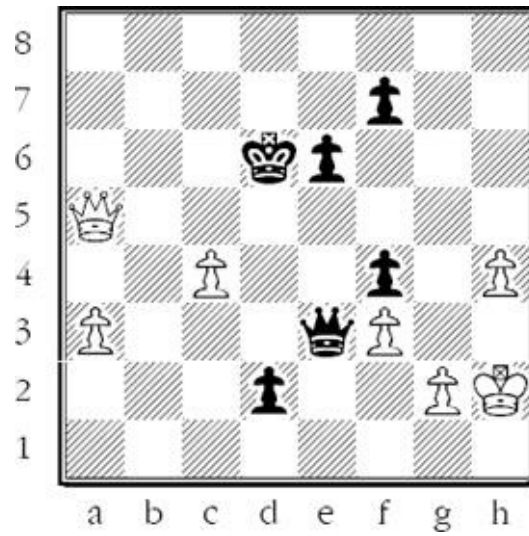
White remains pesky. He's willing to draw.

3...Kd6



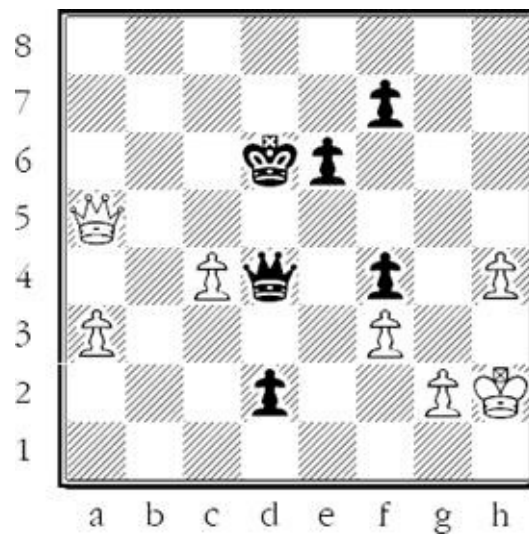
Black decides to play for more. It soon turns out being less.

4.c4



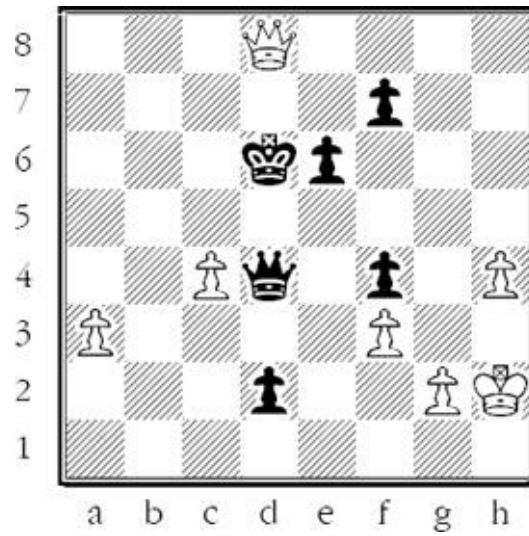
Cute. White realizes that queening runs into a skewer check at d8.

4...Qd4?



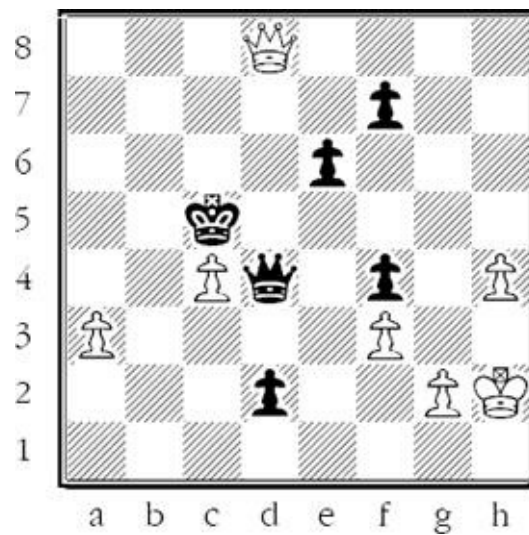
But this is a mistake. In threatening promotion, Black obstructs himself.

5.Qd8+



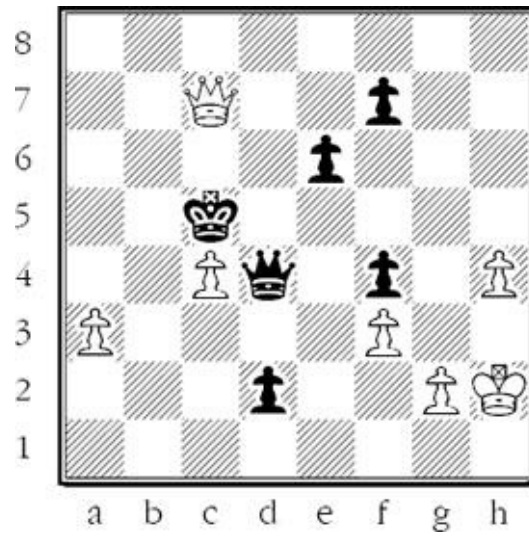
If 5...Ke5, White has 6.Qg5+, when 6.f5?? is met by 7.Qg7+.

5...Kc5??



This saves the queen but not the king.

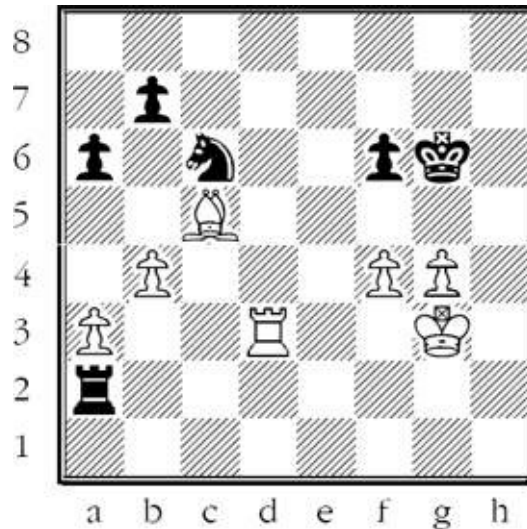
6.Qc7 mate



Black's queen blocks up escape. At this point it's Black who wishes he had a perpetual. **(1-0)**

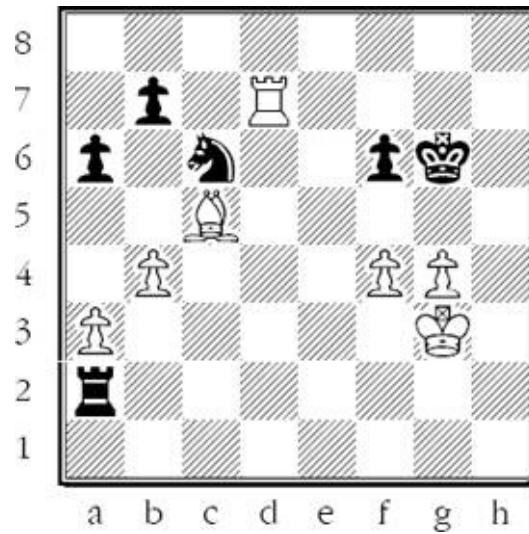
(49) Ivanchuk vs. Ivanovic, 1988

White is up a pawn



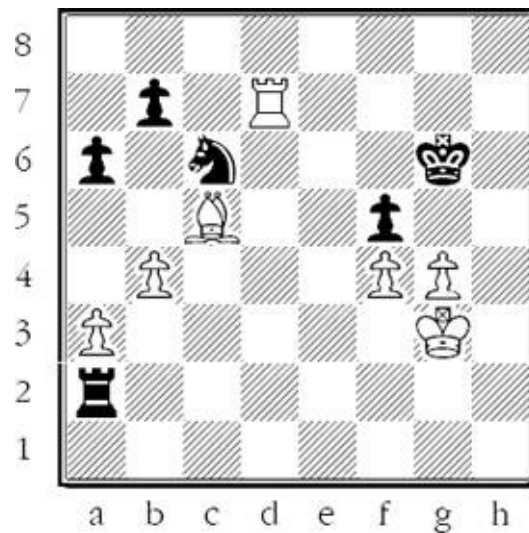
White has an extra kingside pawn. He also has a bishop for a knight. There look to be a few technical difficulties ahead, with Black's rook being active and threatening. But then there's the matter of Black's king. White's rook, bishop, kingside pawns, and even his king, are poised for aggression. It turns out to be enough force to bring home a quick end.

1.Rd7



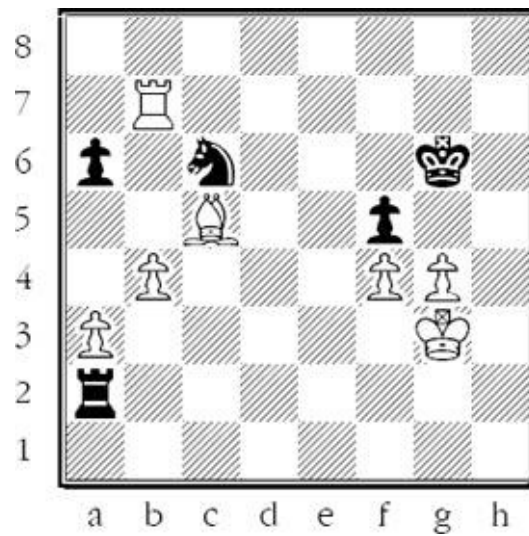
White invades, cutting off the black king's retreat, but letting the a-pawn go with check.

1...f5



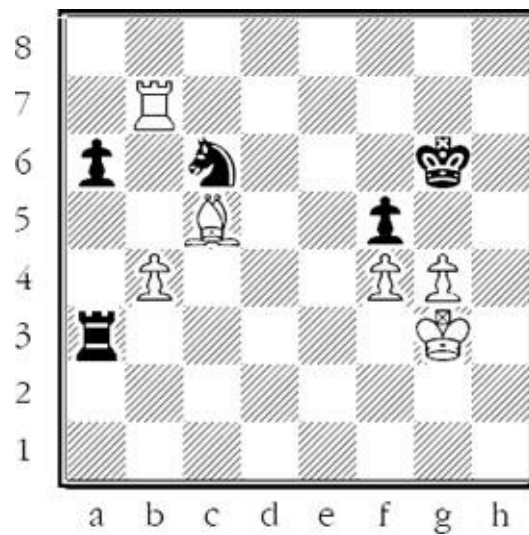
Black begins to fear for his life, thinking 1...Rxa3+ 2.Kh4 is too risky.

2.Rxb7



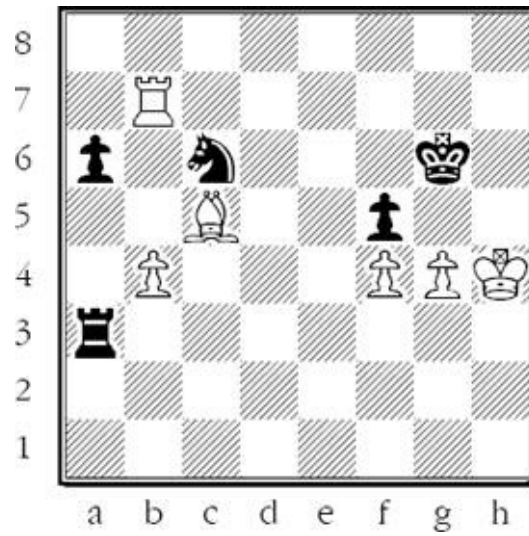
The seventh rank invasion cashes in. Material makes material.

2...Rxa3+



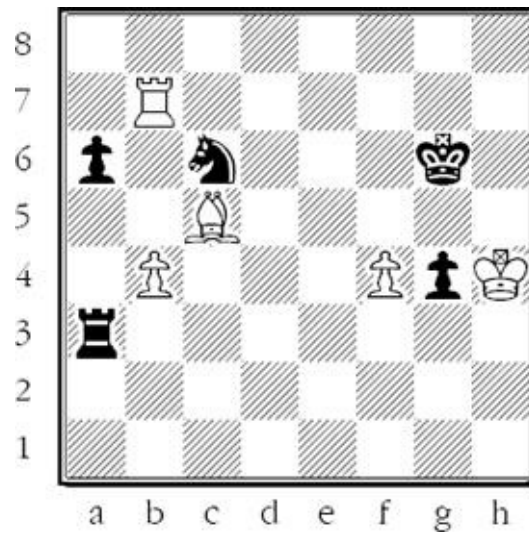
Not so fast. Black gains a pawn back with check.

3.Kh4



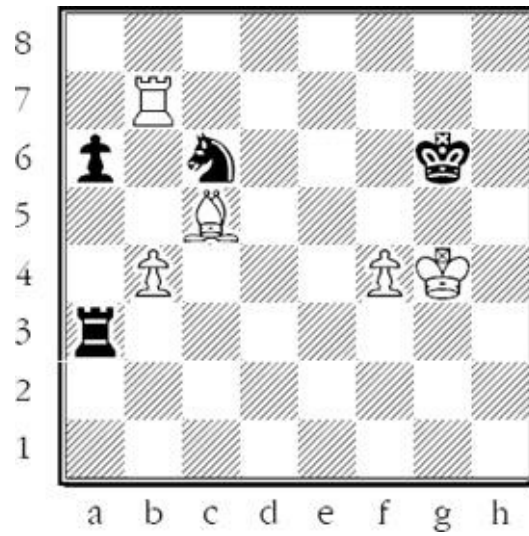
Black tries to create some breathing room for his king.

3...fxg4



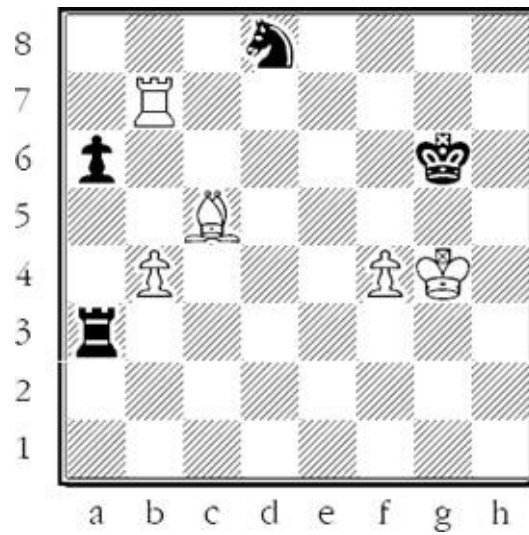
On 4.Rb6? Black has the silencing 4...Kf5, with mate at h3 ahead.

4.Kxg4



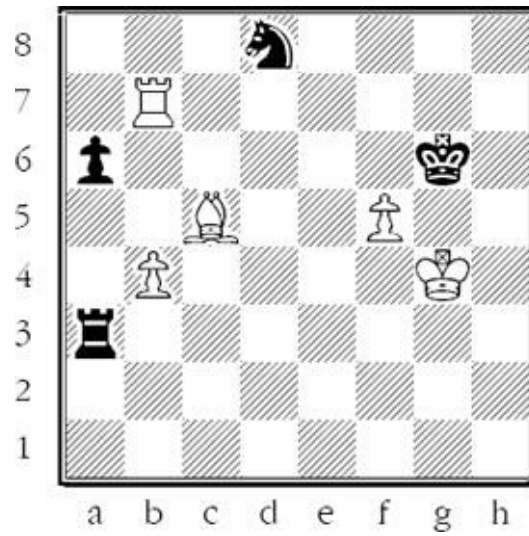
This avoids that previous note. It is Black who must worry once again.

4...Nd8



Black finally had to fear the possible pin of the knight.

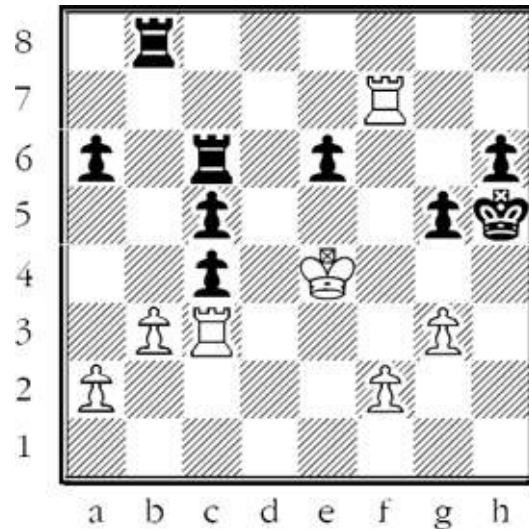
5.f5+



But this is no better. It's mate next move. If 5...Kh6, then 6.Bf8 mate; or if 5...Kf6, then 6.Bd4 mate. **(1-0)**

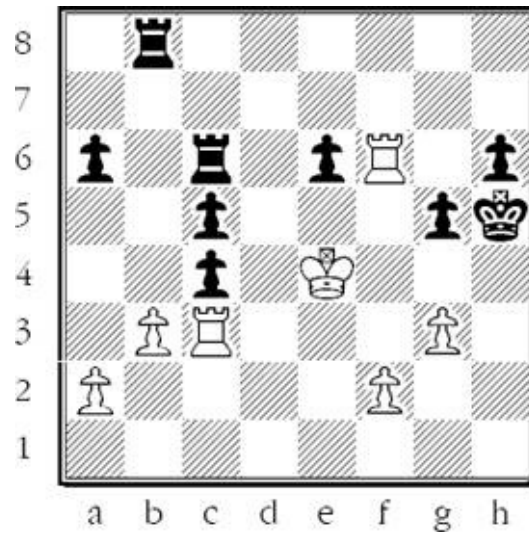
(50) Beliavsky vs. Adams, 1989

White is down two pawns



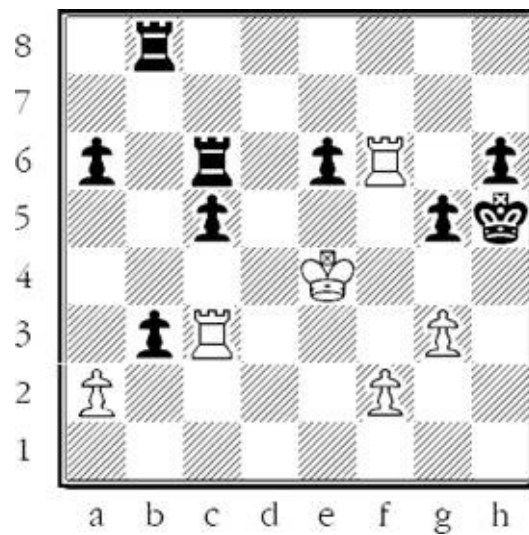
So far it's two rooks and four pawns against two rooks and six pawns. But that's not the whole story, since White wins a pawn back at once and who knows what's happening after that. The real story has to do with coordinating the rooks. Which side can do it better? For better or worse, White does it first, and that's what decides the game.

1.Rf6!



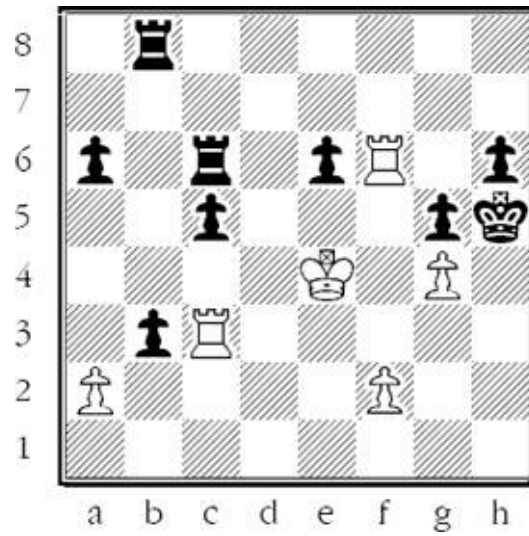
What's this about? White declines to take back on c4. Timing is everything.

1...cxb3



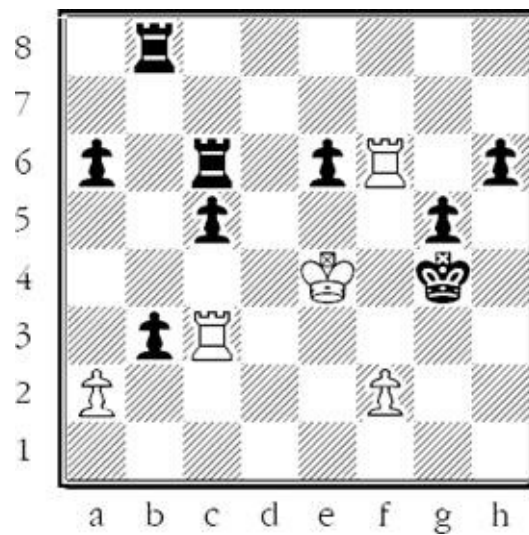
So Black takes another pawn.

2.g4+!



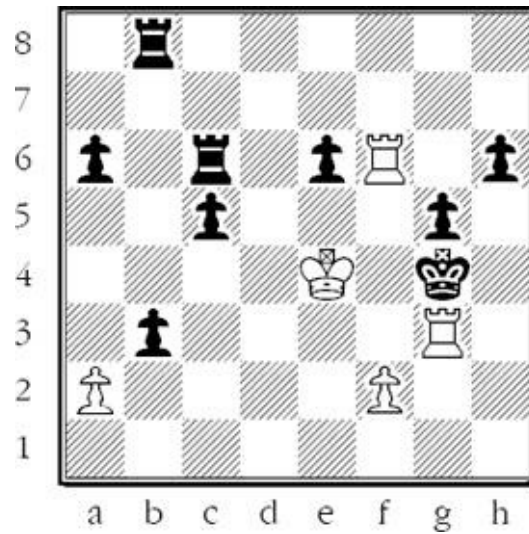
At this point Black must realize he is suddenly in great danger.

2...Kxg4



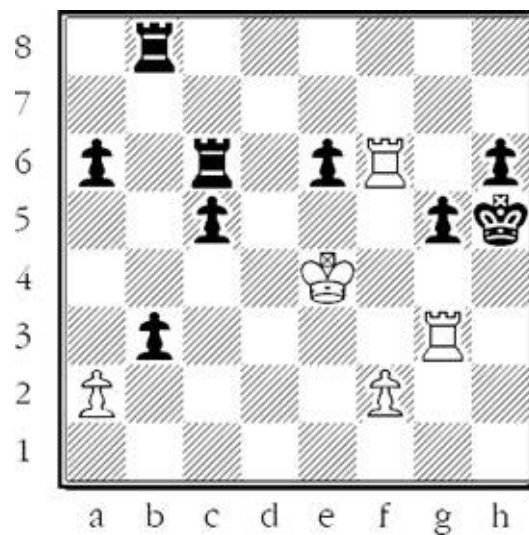
This is better than allowing White to take on h6 with check.

3.Rg3+



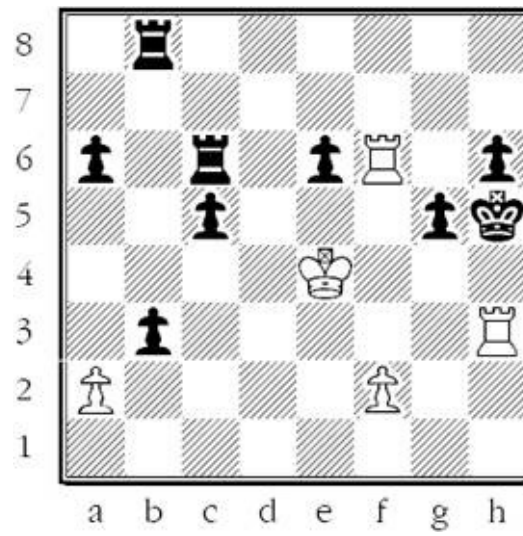
White's check gives Black a chance to go wrong. That is, Black could play 3...Kh4??.

3...Kh5



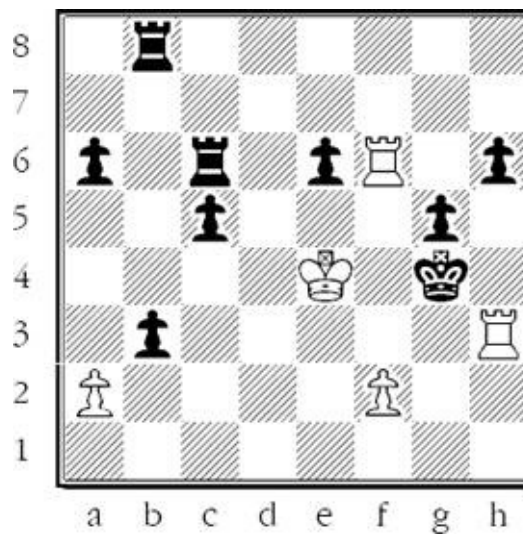
For the sleepwalkers among us, 3...Kh4 allows 4.Rxh6 mate.

4.Rh3+

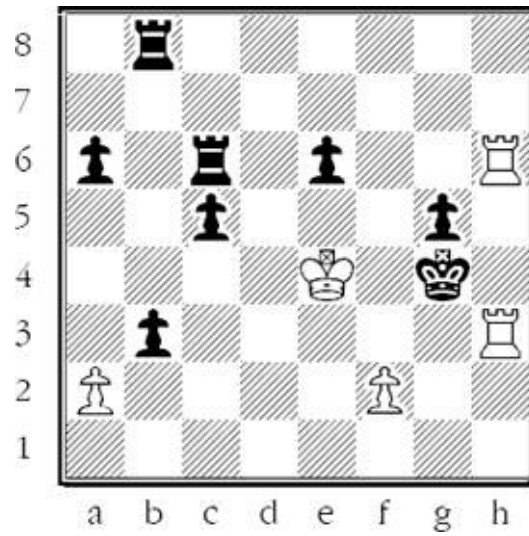


One way or the other, the h-pawn goes.

4...Kg4

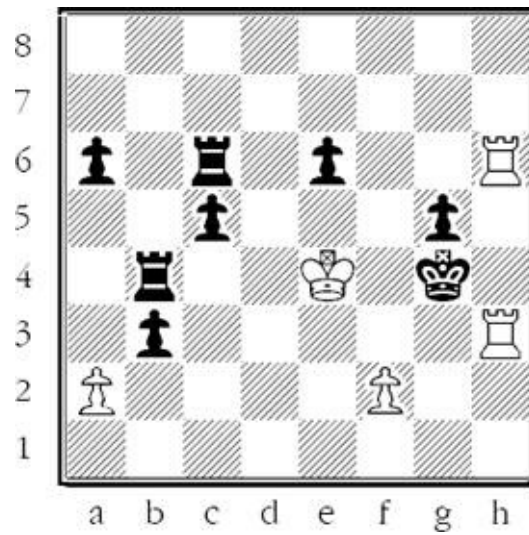


6.Rfxh6



In the offing are two distinct mate threats for White (6.f3 mate and 6.Rg3 mate).

5...Rb4+



Black hopes for 6.Ke3, allowing escape at f5.

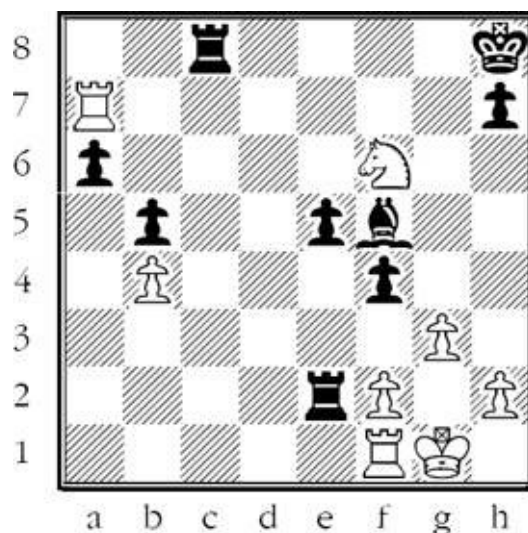
6.Ke5!



(1-0)

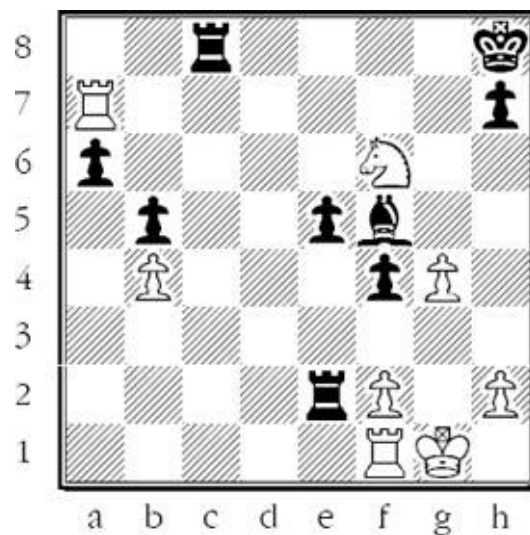
(51) Anand vs. Kamsky, 1990

White is down a pawn



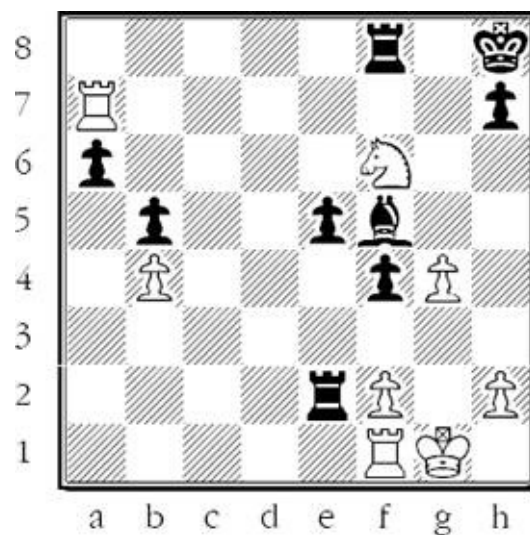
Here we have a wild one, two rooks and bishop vs. two rooks and knight. True, White is down a pawn, but his rook on a7 is menacing, while the knight is not too shabby either. Nevertheless, there is some looseness in the position, with White having weaknesses on the kingside light squares, which Black's bishop may be able to take advantage of. Thus care is required. Great players are very careful indeed.

1.g4!



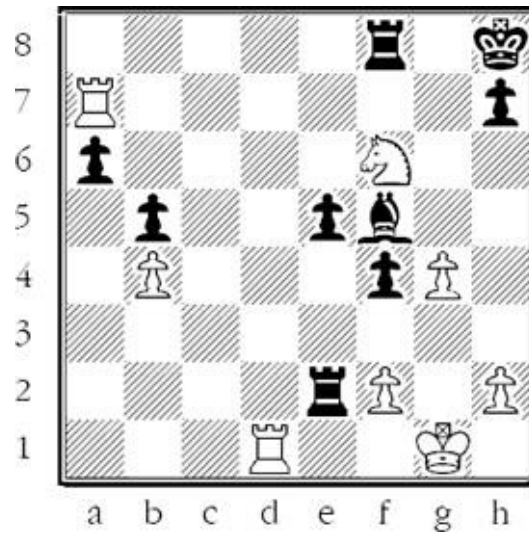
This looks dangerous, but the danger is greater for Black.

1...Rf8



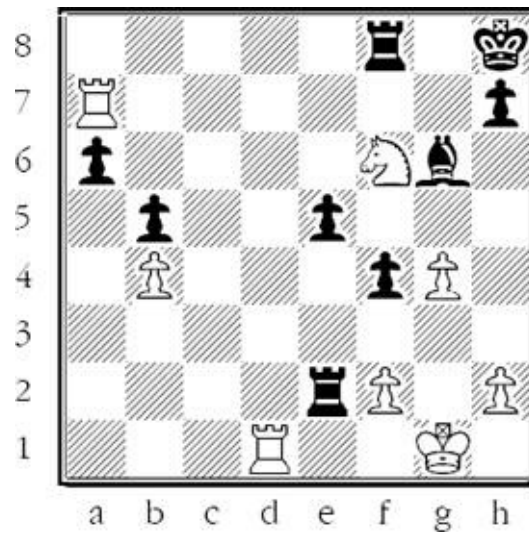
Black hopes to drive away the knight, so that g4 would then hang.

2.Rd1!



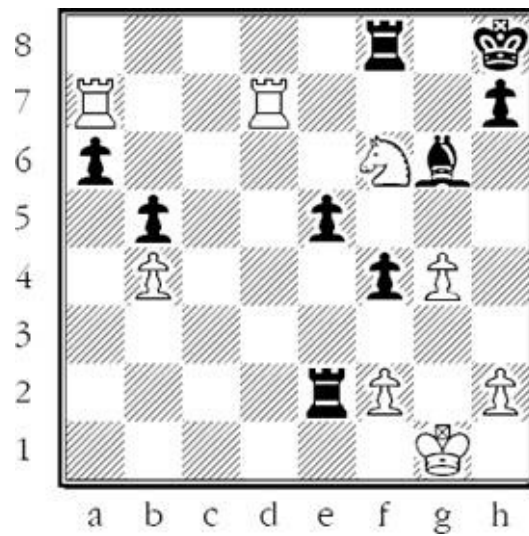
Now the knight is safe, and White's second rook is poised for action.

2...Bg6



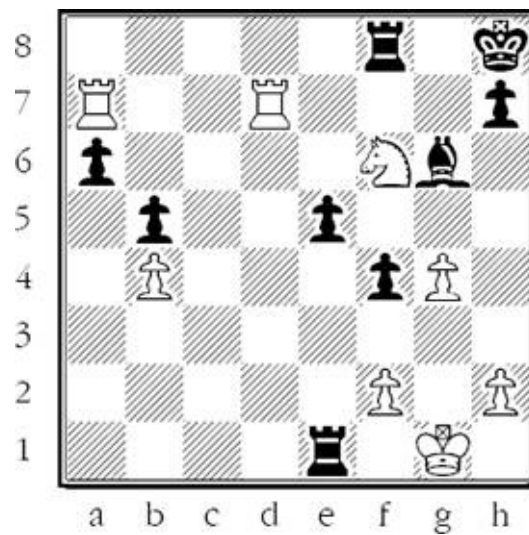
What else? The bishop was attacked and the square h7 had to be guarded.

3.Rdd7!



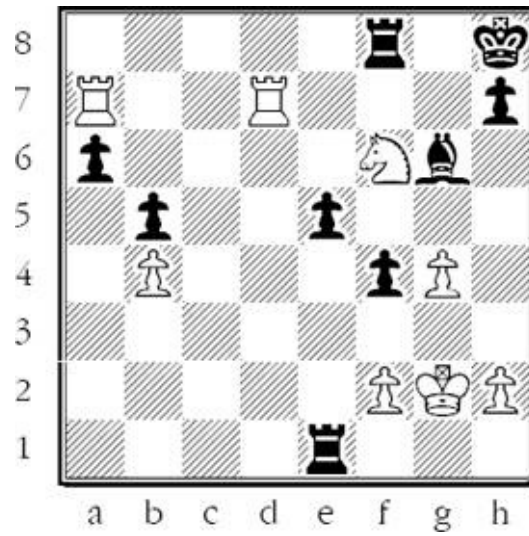
The mate threat is renewed and the knight is still immune.

3...Re1+



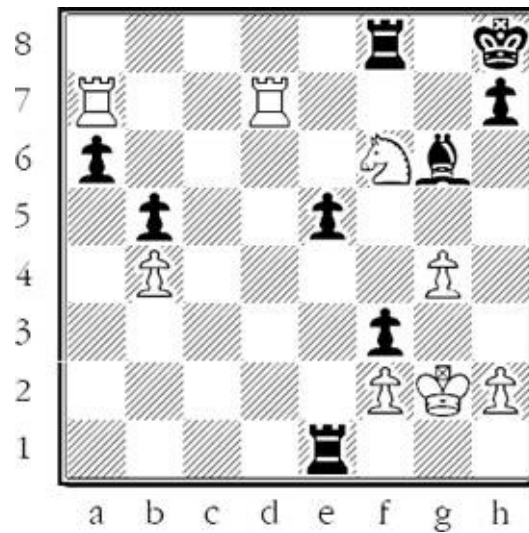
There's always time for a spite check.

4.Kg2



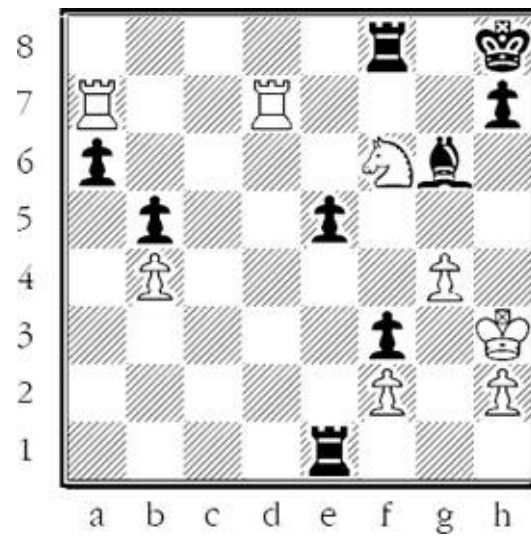
When you have only one move, it's not unusual to play it.

4...f3+



More spite, undoubtedly, just to be social.

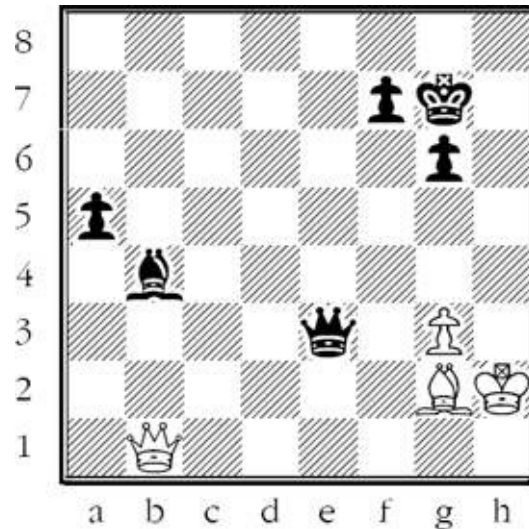
5.Kh3



There are no more checks, nor can mate be delayed much longer. **(1-0)**

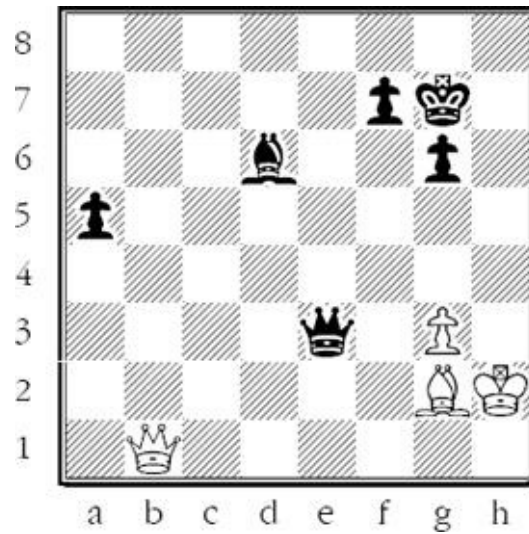
(52) Adams vs. Anand, 1992

Black is up two pawns



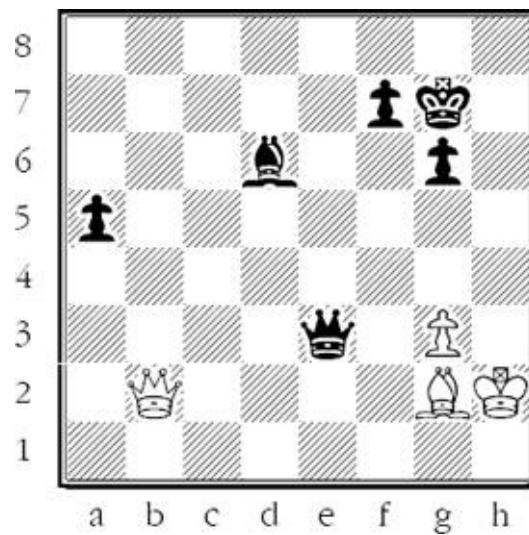
In this queen and bishop ending, Black has a winning edge, even with the presence of opposite color bishops. Especially nice is the a-pawn, always a threat to advance. Meanwhile, White's only pawn is quite vulnerable. It's ready to be plucked. Give Black the move, which he has, and it's not even a matter of time. The game just ends.

1...Bd6



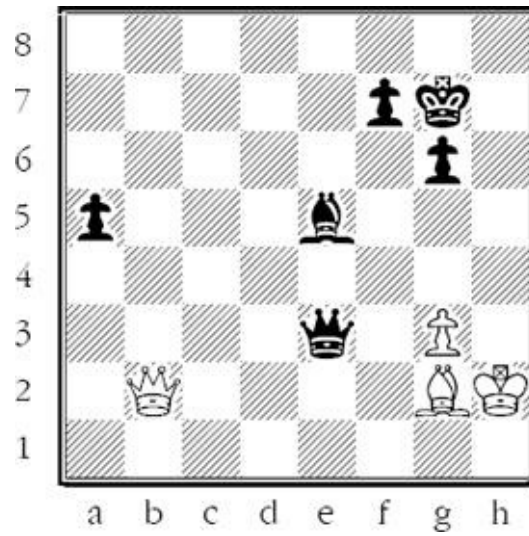
Black zeroes in on the weakness. It's pinned and indefensible.

2.Qb2+



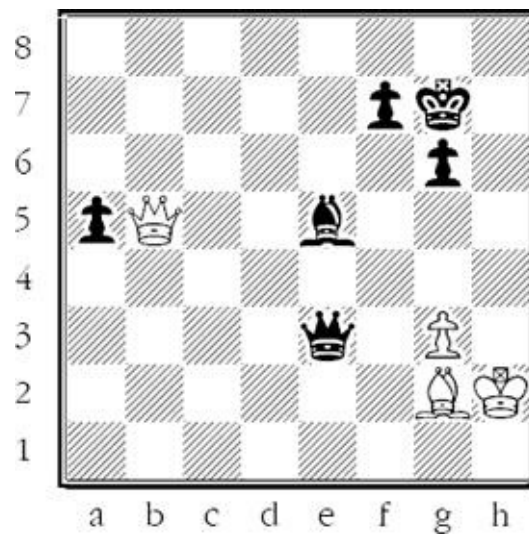
Checks often are given to gain time, or to improve one's position. Neither is true here.

2...Be5!



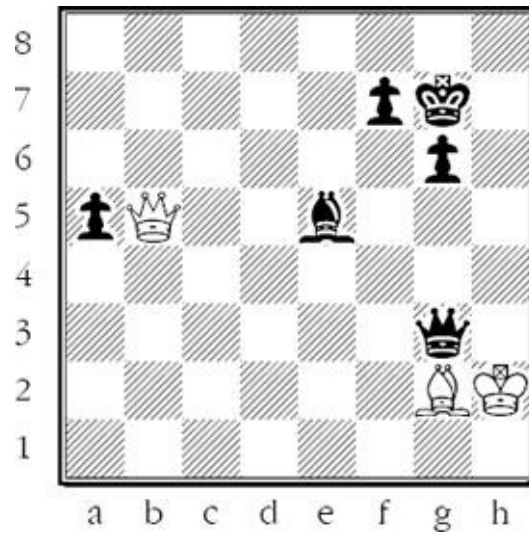
Black gets out of check with a new threat. White's g-pawn is lost.

3.Qb5



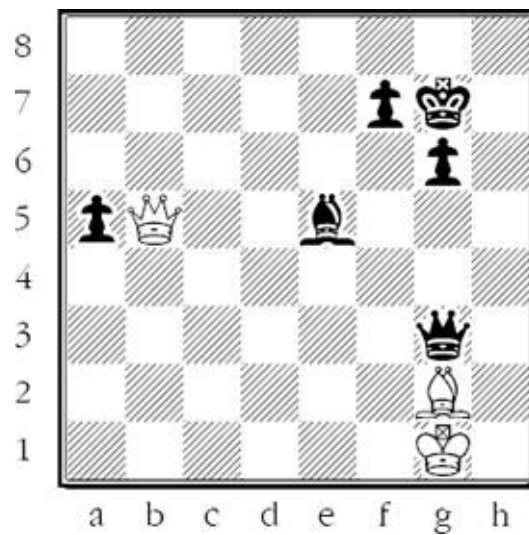
White gets on the a-pawn, but there's little hope.

3...Qxg3+



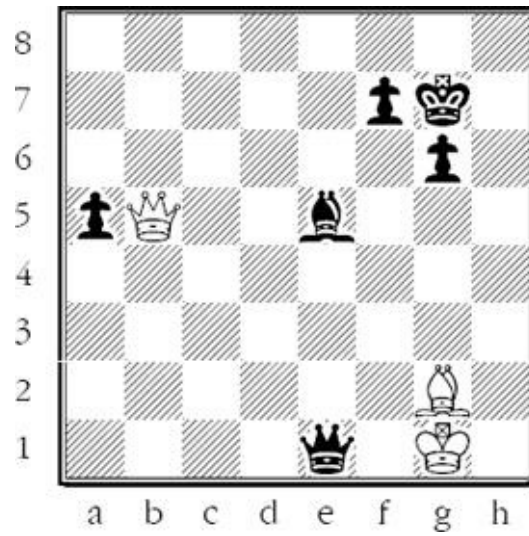
On 3...Bxg3+ 4.Kh1 Qe1+ White can block at f1.

4.Kg1



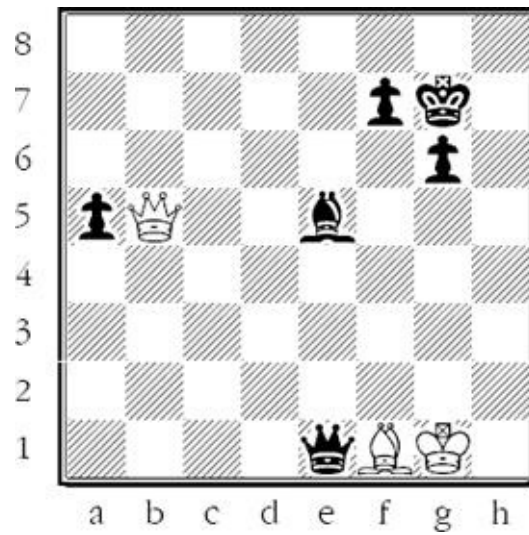
The retreat 4.Kh1 allows mate in one move.

4...Qe1+



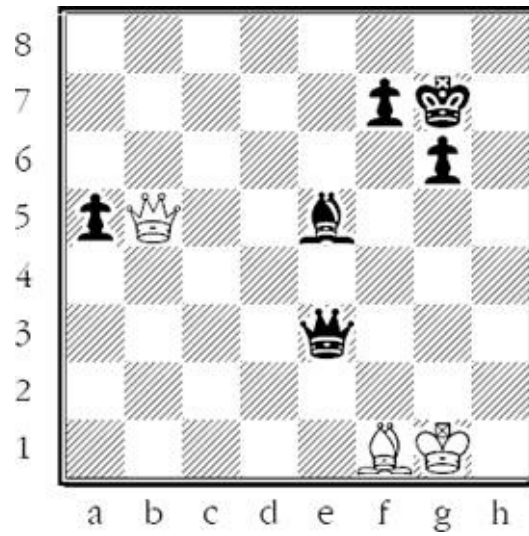
This forces a block at f1.

5.Bf1



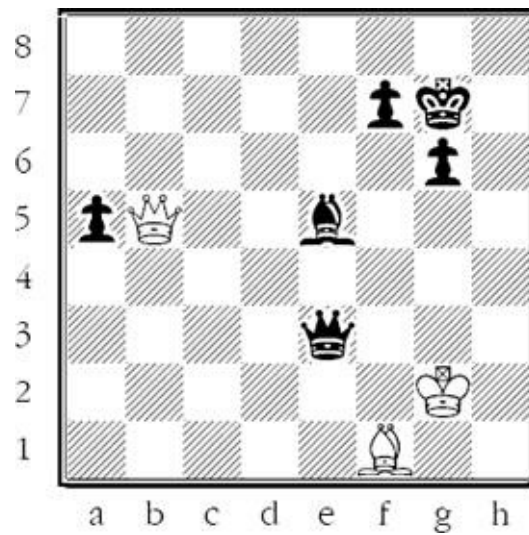
White avoids a queen trade, looking for counterplay.

5...Qe3+!



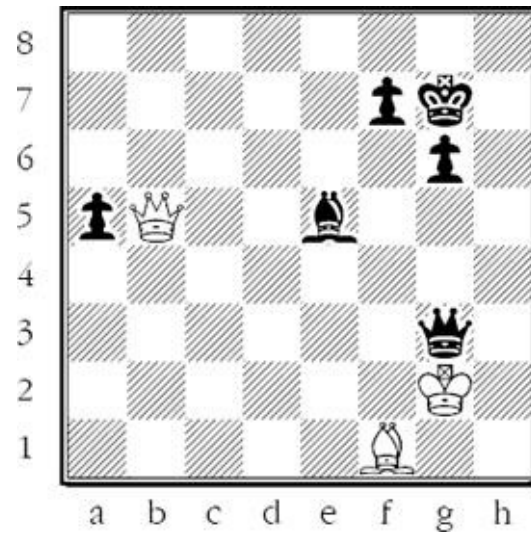
On 6.Kh1 Qf3+ 7.Kg1 (7.Bg2 Qh5+) Qg3+ 8. Bg2 Bd4+ 9. Kh1, Black mates with 9...Qh4+.

6.Kg2



But this walks into immediate mate.

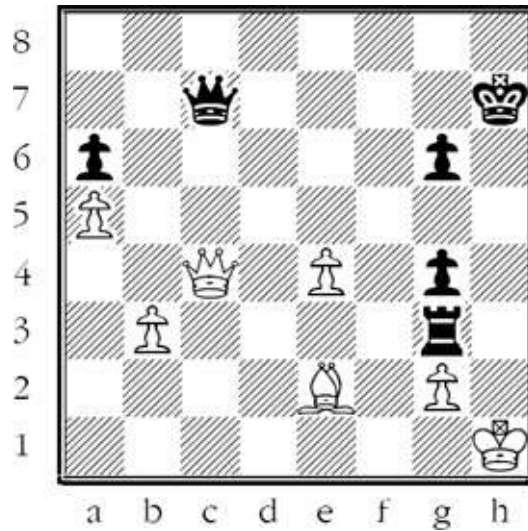
6...Qg3+



It's mate next. **(0-1)**

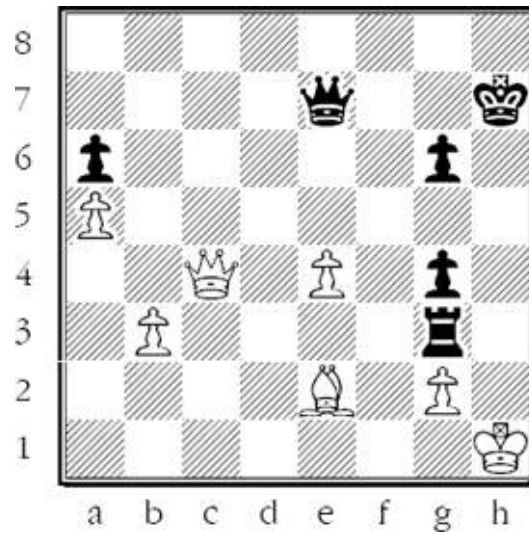
(53) Van Wely vs. Anand, 1992

Black is up the Exchange for a pawn



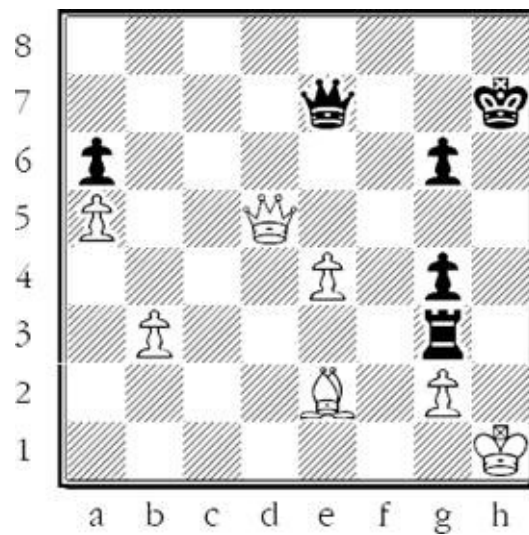
Although Black is up the Exchange, his rook seems somewhat encased for now, with his doubled g-pawns seemingly getting in the way. Both kings are a little airy, though it may be that White's is airier. Maybe that's why White would be content to trade queens, hoping to survive. But Black realizes he's pressing an attack and not yet seeking trades. That explains his next move.

1...Qe7



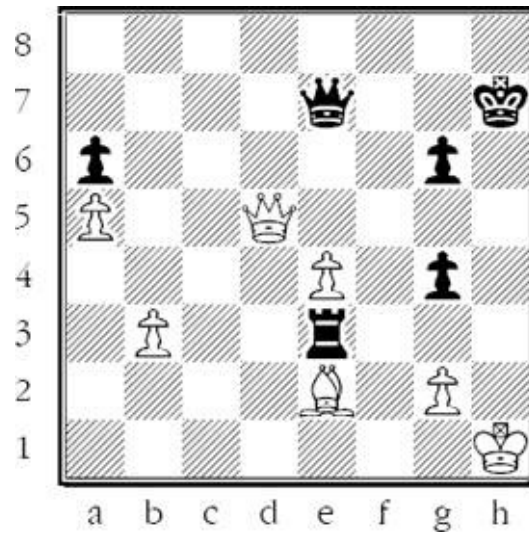
Black declines the queen trade and eyes invasion at h4.

2.Qd5



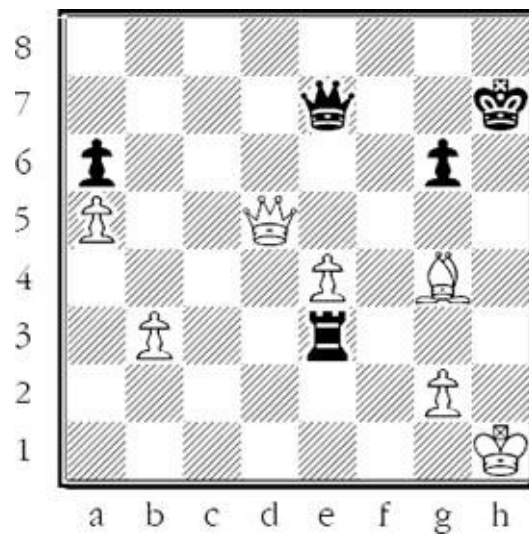
This defends the king-pawn, and centralizes the queen, but there's more going on here.

2...Re3



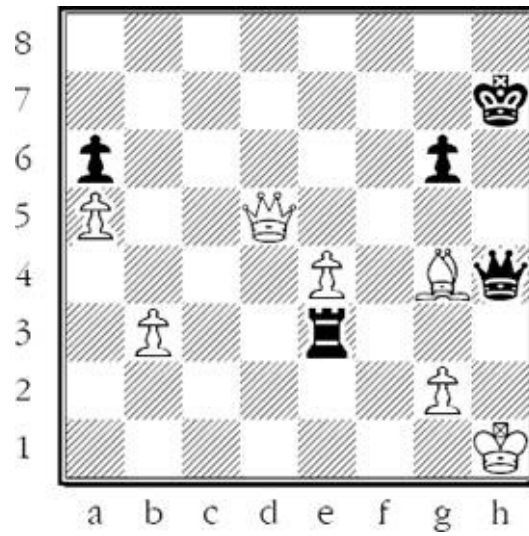
Black activates the rook with multiple threats.

3.Bxg4



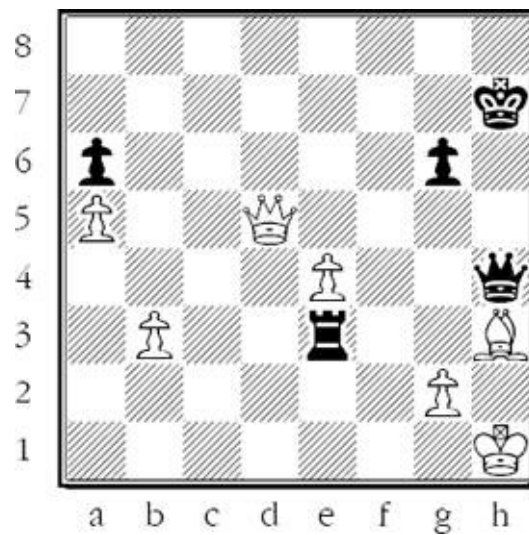
In taking the g-pawn White has the option of blocking on h3.

3...Qh4+



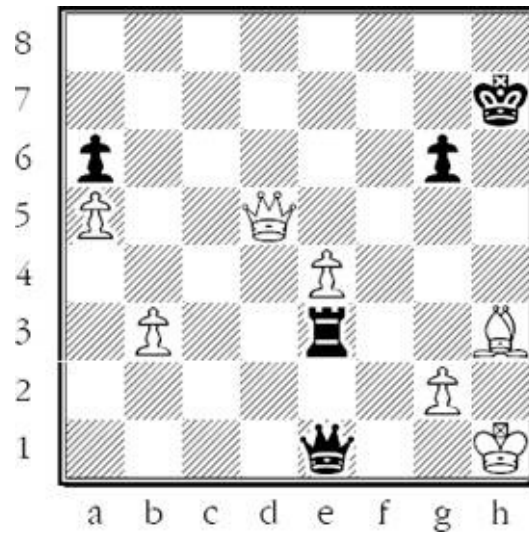
White's move is forced.

4.Bh3



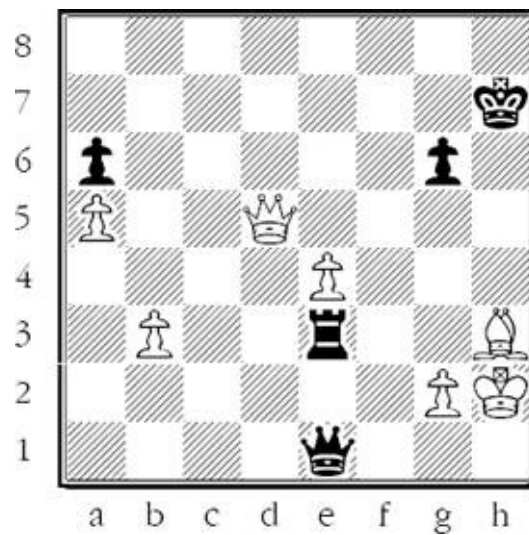
The other losing move (4.Kg1) is met by 4...Re1 mate.

4...Qe1+



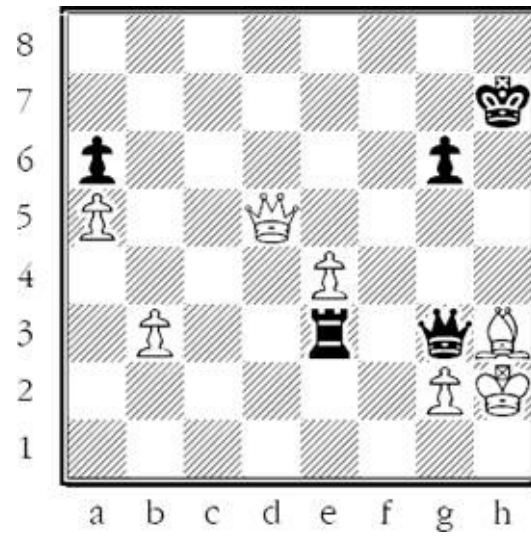
White is caught in a simple mating net.

5.Kh2



There's no saving the game for White.

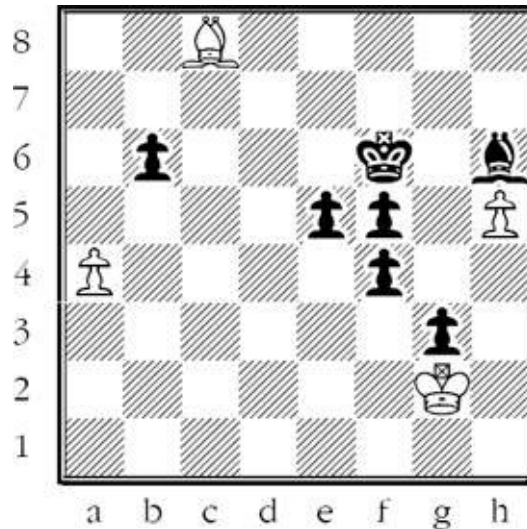
5...Qg3+



It's mate next move. **(0-1)**

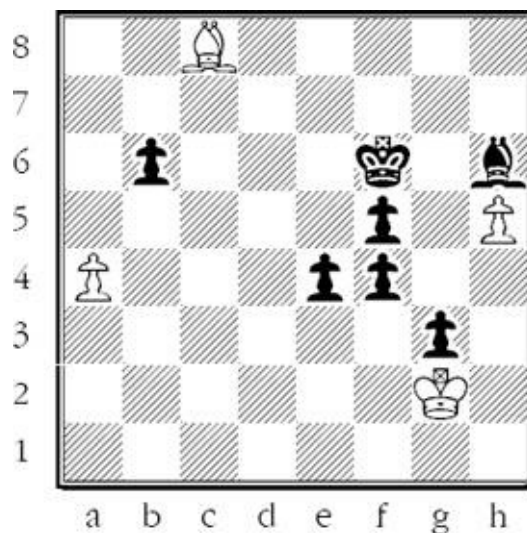
(54) Kamsky vs. Kramnik, 1992

Black is up three pawns



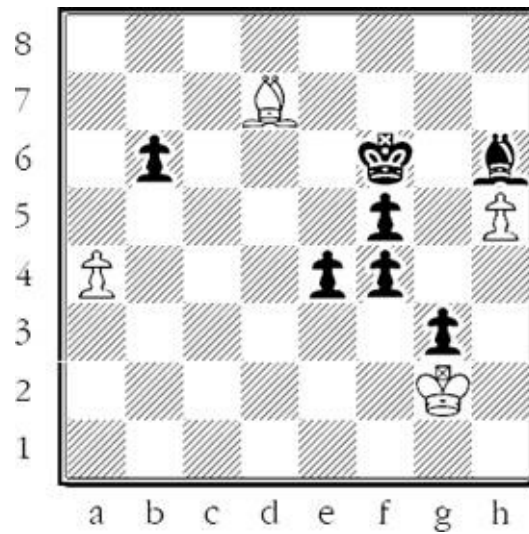
Black has a distinct advantage, with a persuasive mass of pawns ready to roll. The only fly in the ointment is the presence of opposite color bishops. Nonetheless, a juggernaut of four pawns and a surprise ending are all Black needs to register a winning smile. Well, it helps when a plan comes together.

1...e4



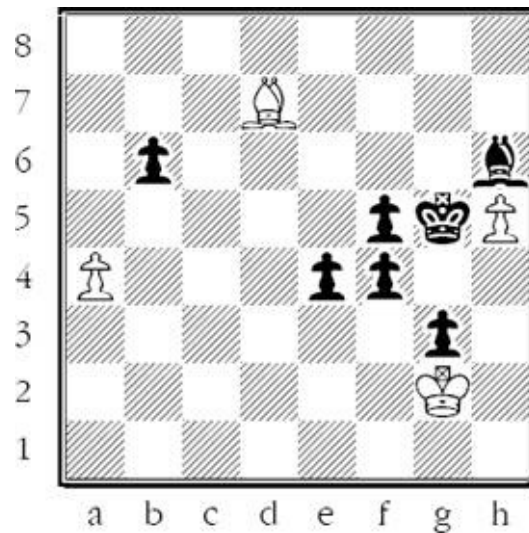
Inexorably, the pawns move up.

2.Bd7



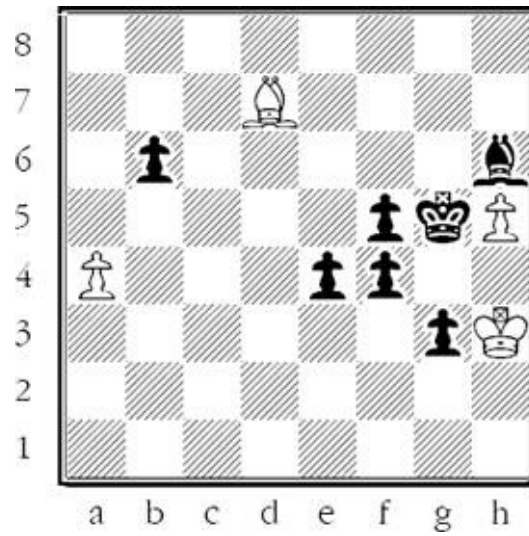
If anything, White's bishop can now defend the h-pawn.

2...Kg5



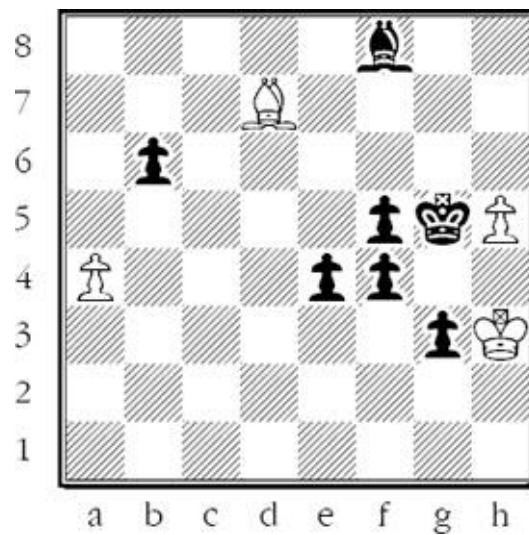
Black improves the position of his king.

3.Kh3



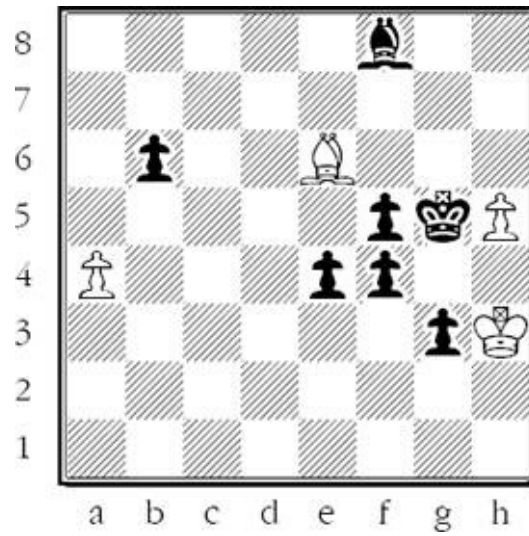
No need to defend h5 when f5 is hanging.

3...Bf8!



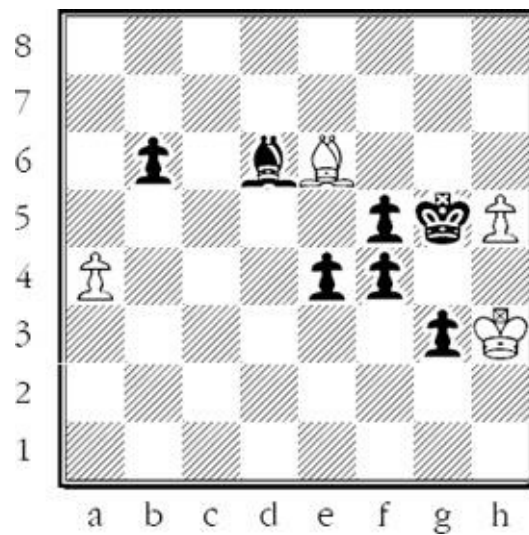
This redeployment is the beginning of the end of the end.

4.Be6



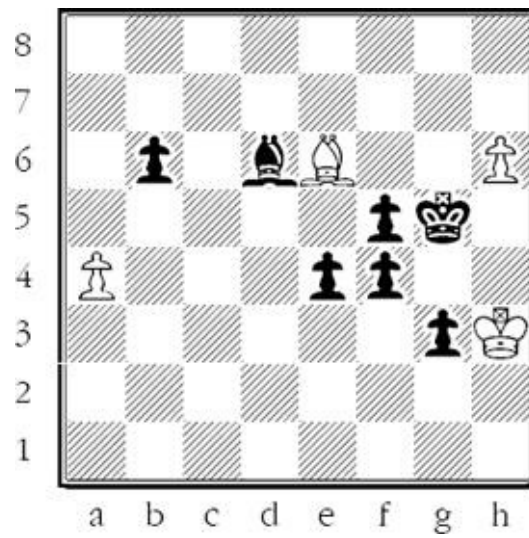
White bides his time, not having anything constructive to do.

4...Bd6



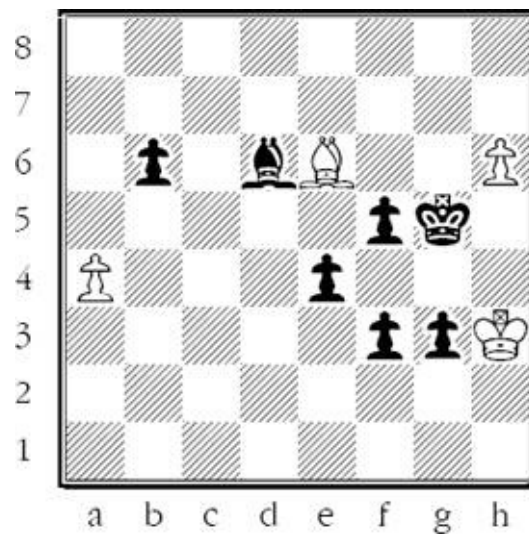
This abandons h6 to the black king.

5.h6



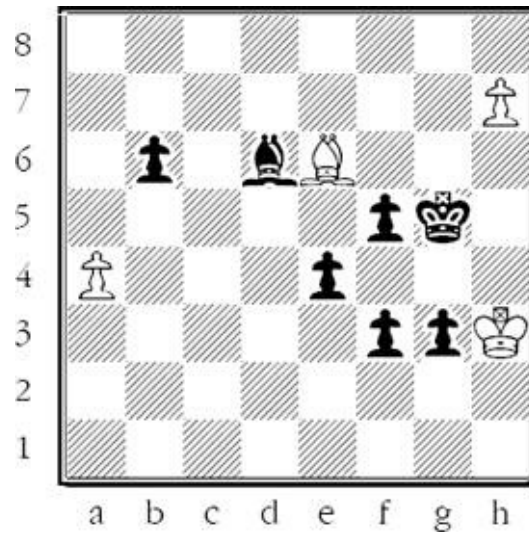
On 5...Kxh6 White will try 6.Bxf5.

5...f3



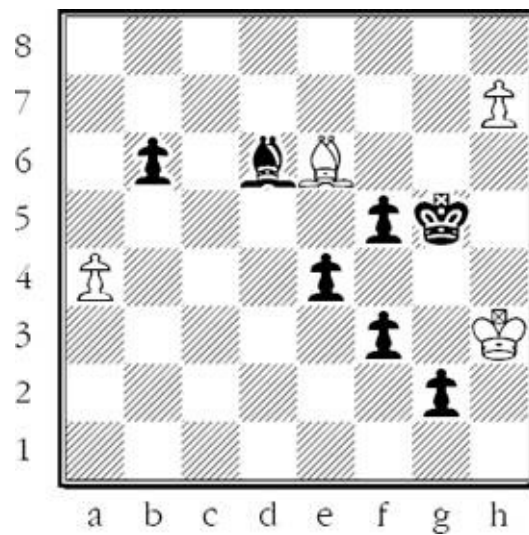
Black ignores the advancing h-pawn for greater gain.

6.h7



White seizes what chance there is.

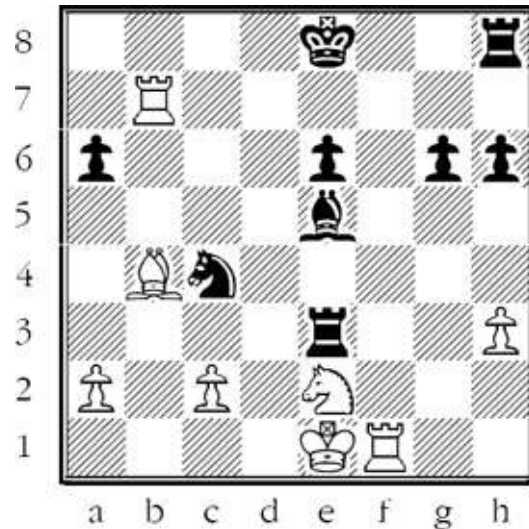
6...g2!



White was hoping for 7.h8/Q g1/Q 8.Qg7+, but now sees that 7...g1/N! is mate.
(0-1)

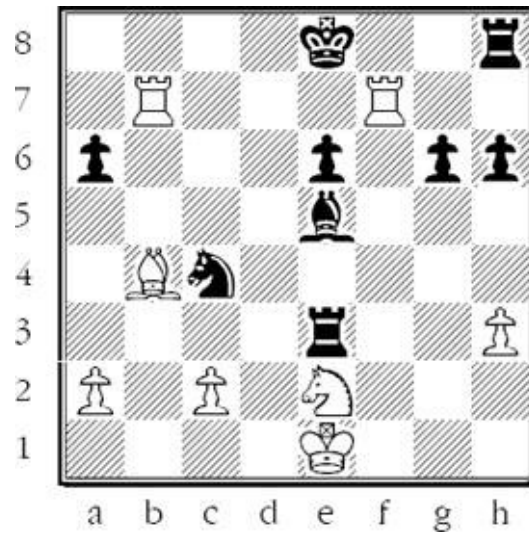
(55) Topalov vs. Kasparov, 1994

White is down a pawn



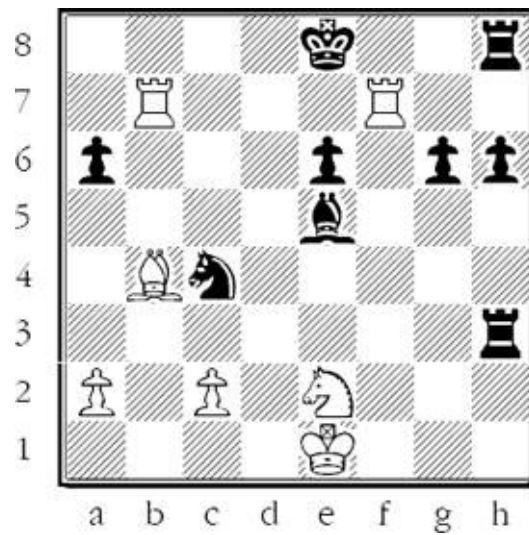
Black has an extra pawn and some centralized forces in this complicated position, but there's so much happening, it's hard to weigh it all. One source of counterplay is White's rook at b7. It dominates the 7th rank, confining Black's king, and the first rook may soon be joined by an equally menacing partner. In the end, that partnership could rule the day. It does!

1.Rff7!



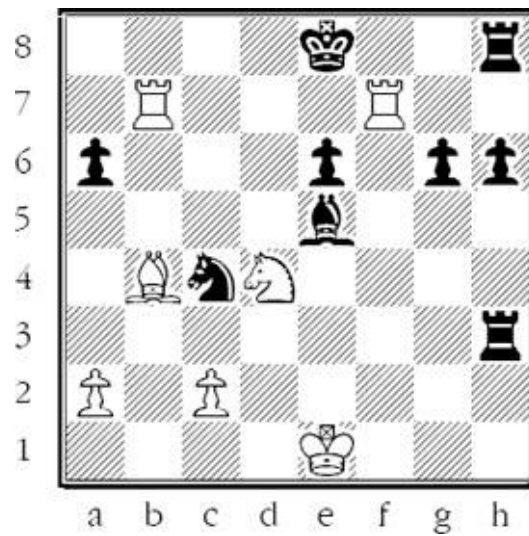
White doubles on the seventh rank. Various threats are in the air. You can smell them.

1...Rhx3



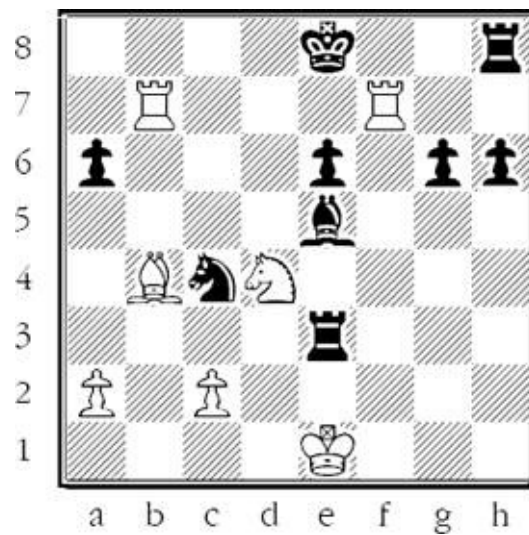
Black now has connected pawns on the kingside.

2.Nd4!



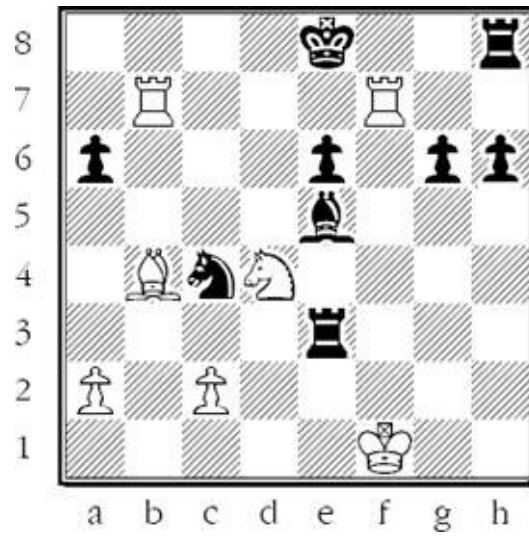
The knight is immune. If 2...Bxd4, then 3.Rfe7+ Kd8 4.Rb8 is mate.

2...Re3+



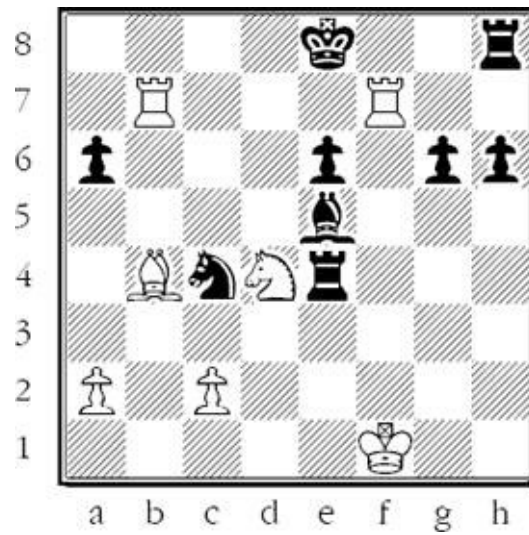
Black wants to see how White intends to answer this check.

3.Kf1



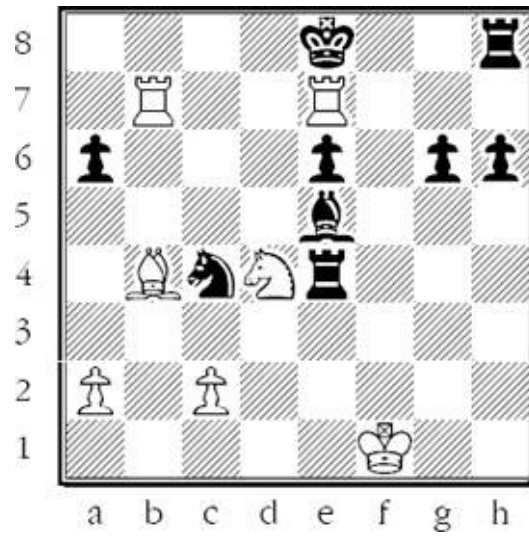
White avoids f2 and the possibility of a bishop check at g3.

3...Re4



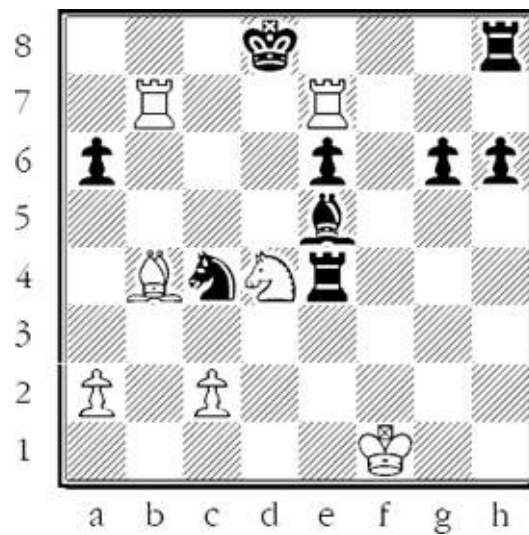
This clears e3 for a knight check, followed by a defensive repositioning to d5.

4.Rfe7+



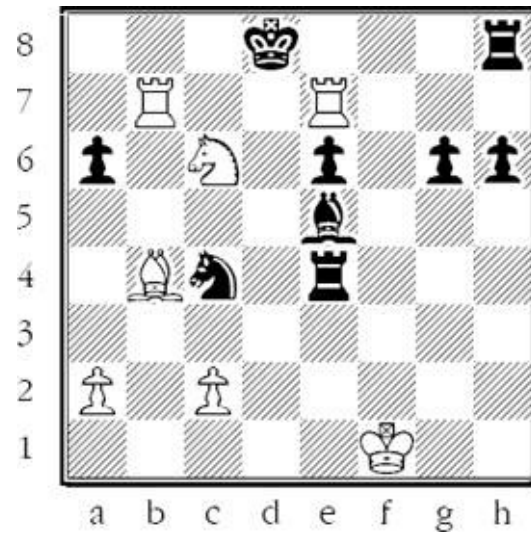
But now it's over. Black is mated either way the king goes.

4...Kd8



On 4...Kf8, White had 5.Nxe6+ Kg8 6.Rg7+ Bxg7 7.Rxg7 mate.

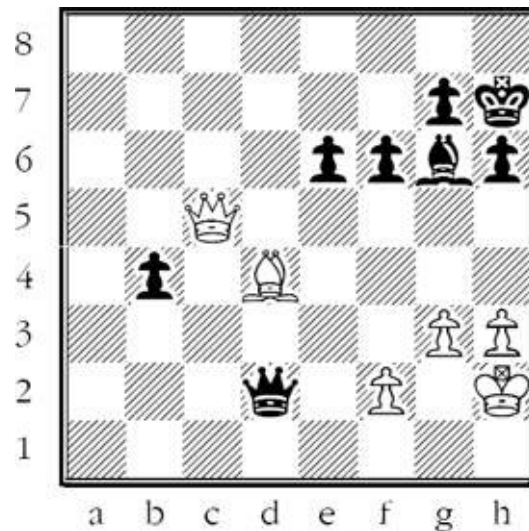
5.Nc6+



That's it: it's over after 5...Kc8 6.Na7+ Kd8 7.Rbd7 mate. **(0-1)**

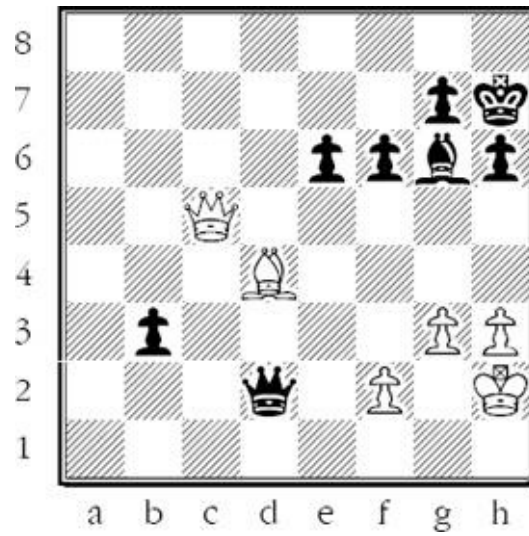
(56) Krasenkow vs. Anand, 1996

Black is up two pawns



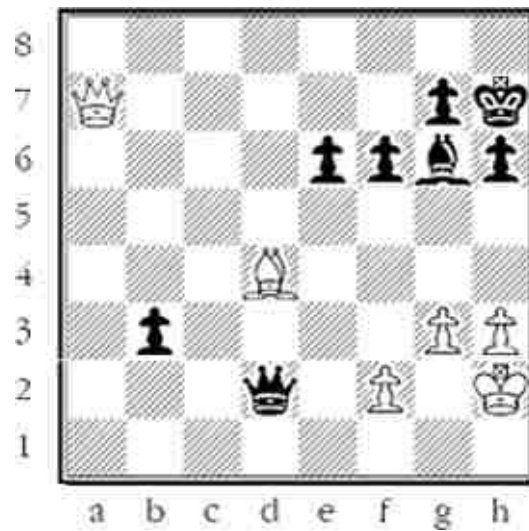
Black has a distinct advantage to start with, being up two pawns. White hopes for some counterplay, and maybe his queen and bishop can set up a blockade on the dark squares. But the passed b-pawn is not to be sneezed at. Combine its threat to advance with a definite strength on the kingside light squares and we can see that Black's edge is significant. The rest is chess history.

1...b3



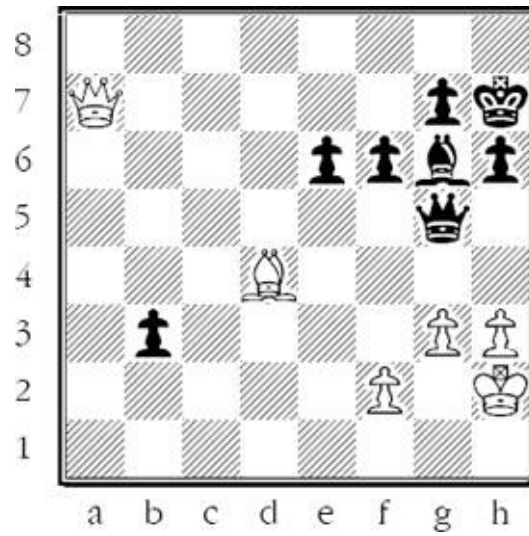
Passed pawns must be pushed. Hundreds, if not thousands, have said this before.

2.Qa7



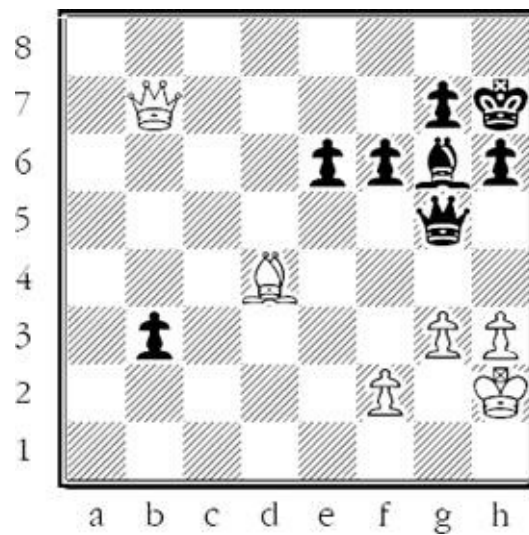
If Black fails to look he falls victim to 2...b2? 3.Bxf6.

2...Qg5



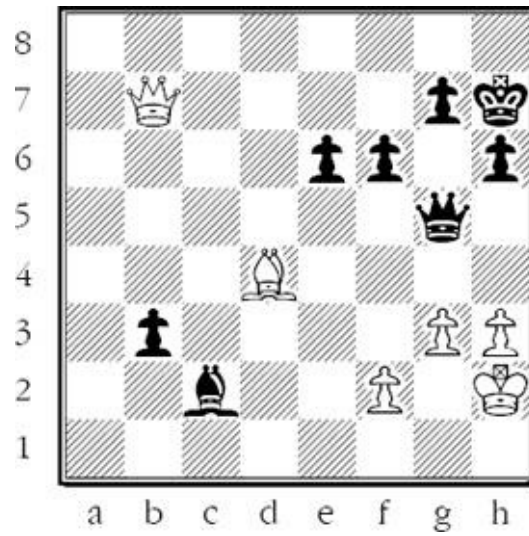
Black guards against the threat and repositions his queen.

3.Qb7



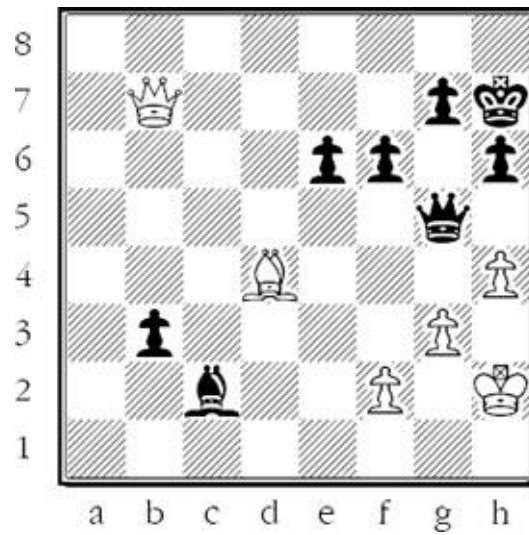
White attacks the passed pawn and overprotects b2.

3...Bc2



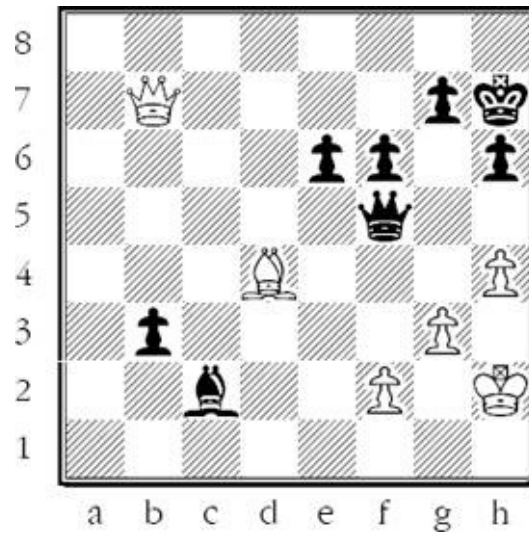
Black's asset must be secured.

4.h4



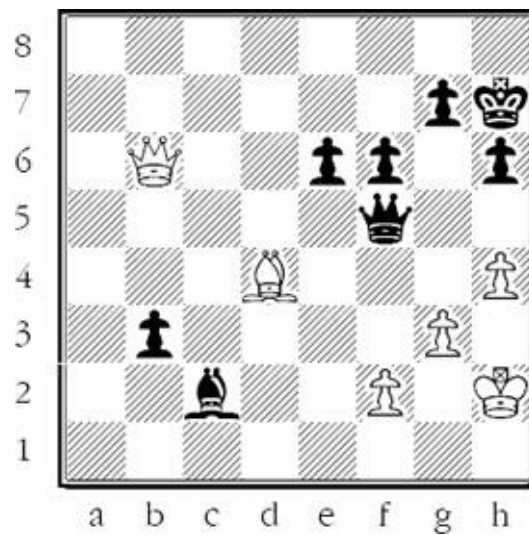
White attacks the queen and forces it to redeploy.

4...Qf5



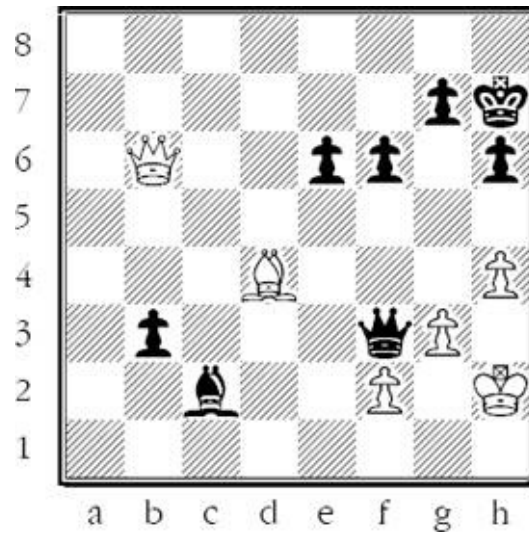
Black seizes control of key light squares and eyes f2.

5.Qb6



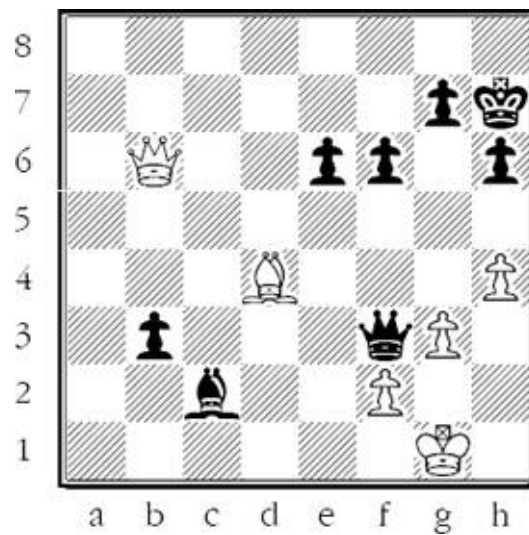
This natural move reinforces f2, but there are still problems ahead.

5...Qf3!



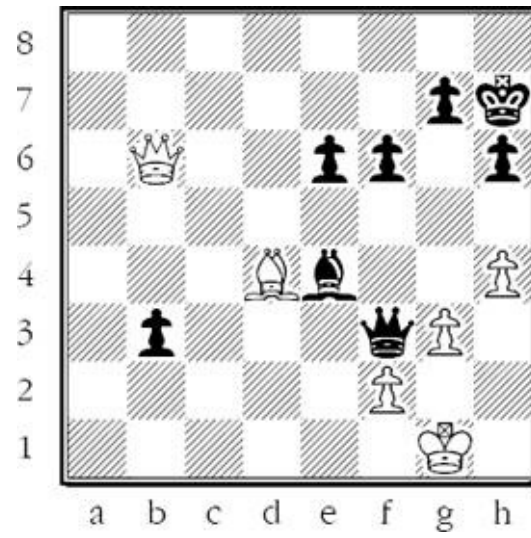
Black's powerful invasion will soon decide matters.

6.Kg1



You can run but you can't hide.

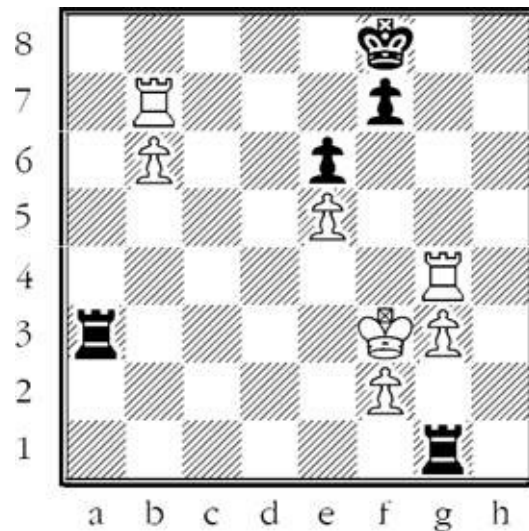
6...Be4



White has no defense of the light squares. If 7.Kf1 then 7...Qd1 is mate. **(0-1)**

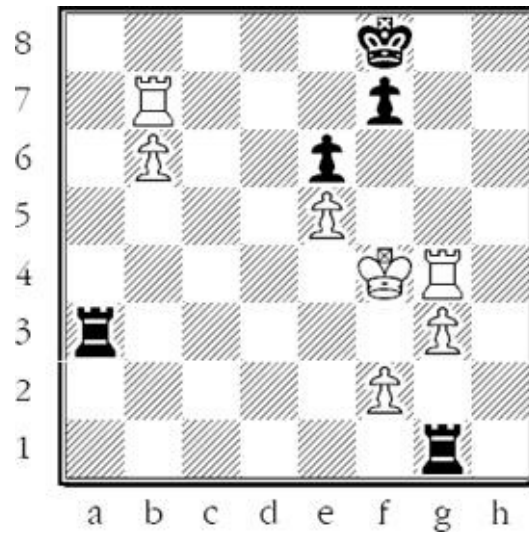
(57) Kramnik vs. Van Wely, 1998

White is up two pawns



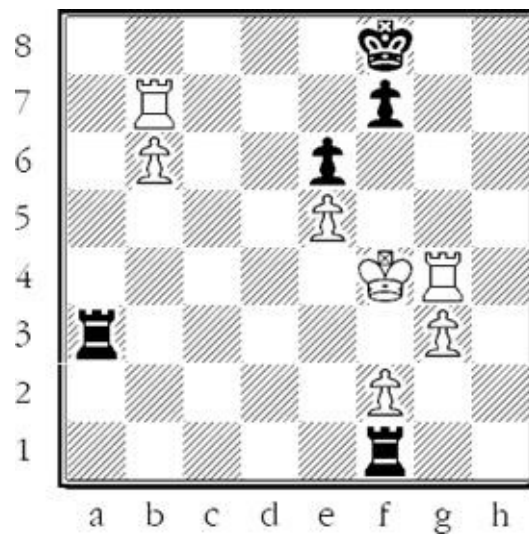
White is ahead by two pawns in this double rook endgame. True, he's in check, but the rules allow him to try to get out of check. In abeyance are the dangerous b-pawn and White's aim of improving the g4-rook's worth. It all happens rather suddenly, and that's just what we were hoping for. Otherwise, why include this example?

1.Kf4



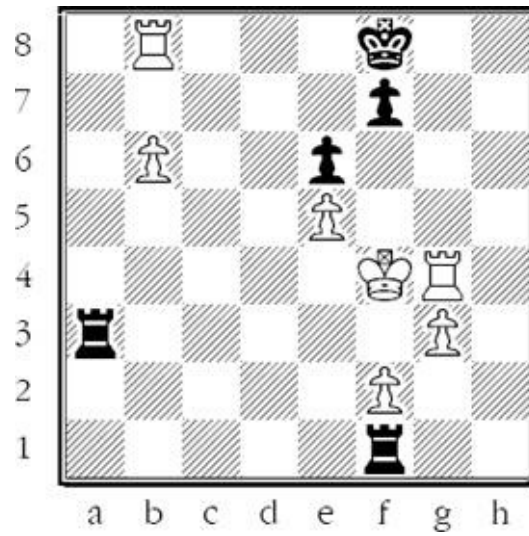
White's king is now prepared to go to g5 and beyond.

1...Rf1



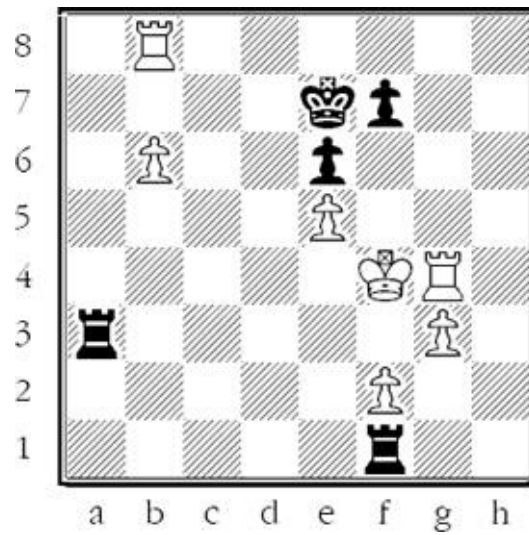
This wins the f-pawn, for what it's worth.

2.Rb8+



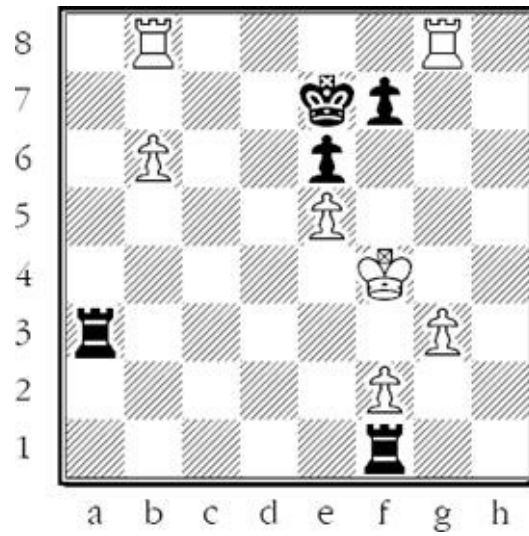
This is not merely a check. It also enables the g4-rook to invade.

2...Ke7



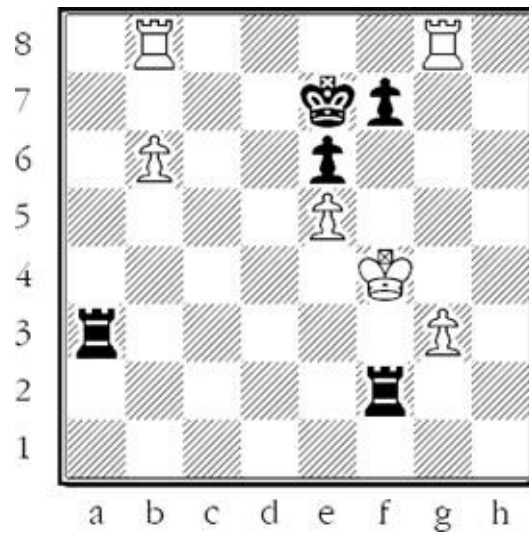
No need to think about it: Black had only move.

3.Rgg8!



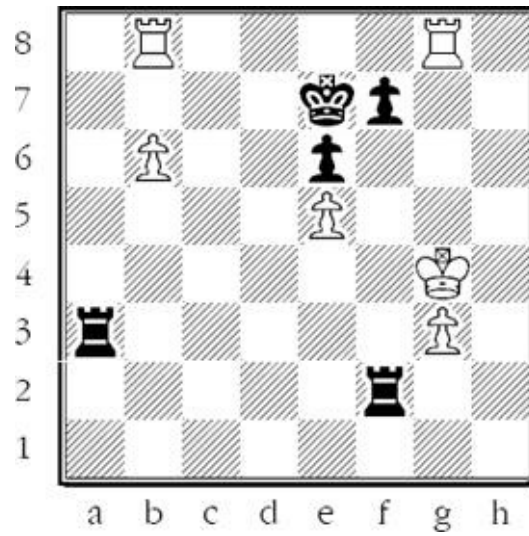
White's intrusion upgrades the eighth rank and immediately decides the game.

3...Rxf2+



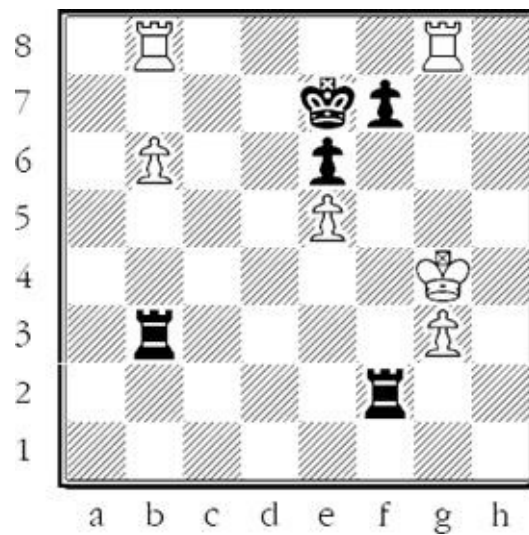
Black wins a pawn, but 3...Kd7 would have met up with 4.Rgc8!.

4.Kg4



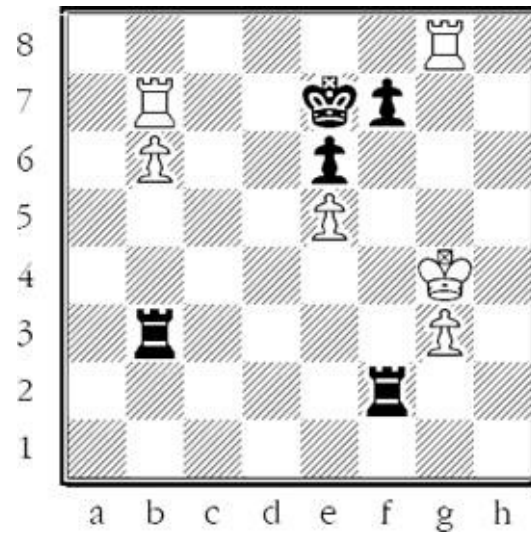
White keeps g3 guarded.

4...Rb3



On 4...Ra4+ White's king had shelter at h3.

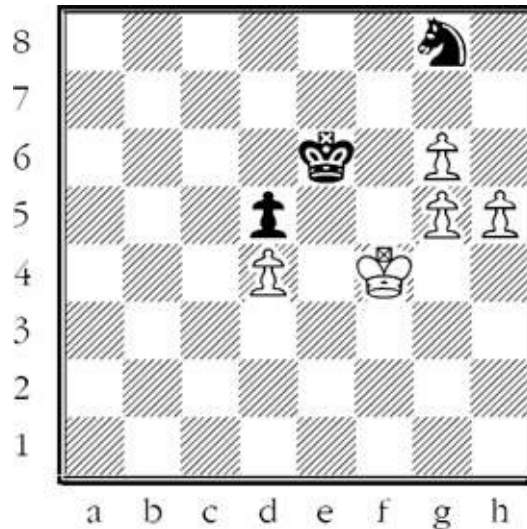
5.Rb7 mate



Oops! The term for this condition is mate. **(1-0)**

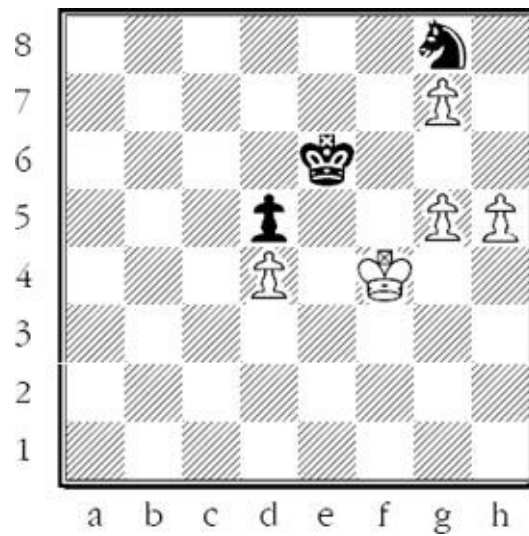
(58) Topalov vs. Piket, 1998

White has two pawns for a knight



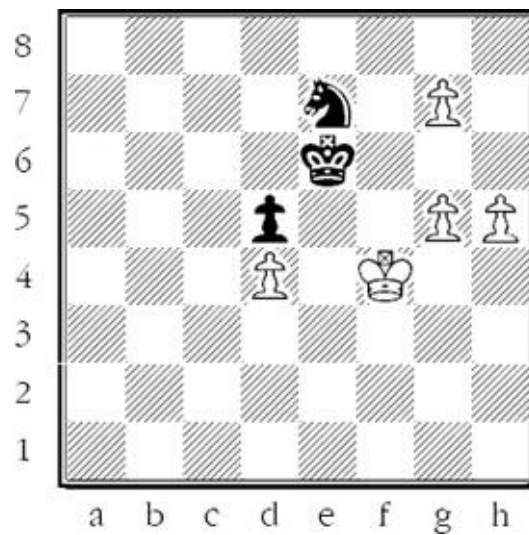
Other than his king, White begins with no pieces, but he does have four pawns, with three of them in a bunch and anxious to advance. On the other hand, Black has a knight, though such vehicles tend to run out of room as the action approaches the board's perimeter. In the end (there's always an end), the threat to promote becomes too much for Black to handle. Sometimes it's hard to cope.

1.g7!



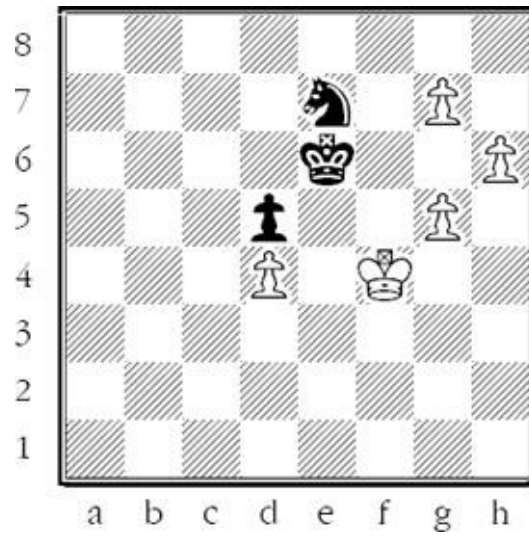
The g7-pawn is now poised to become something important.

1...Ne7



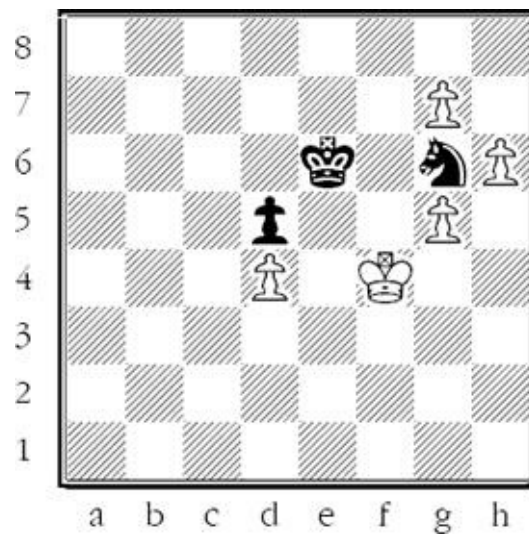
Black tries to keep his knight flexible and active.

2.h6



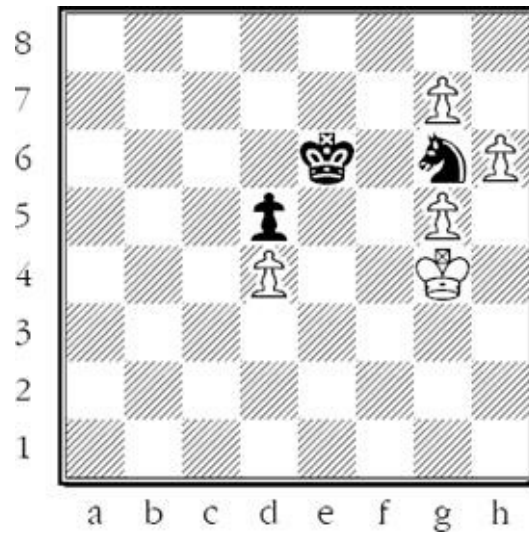
And now the h-pawn becomes menacing.

2...Ng6+



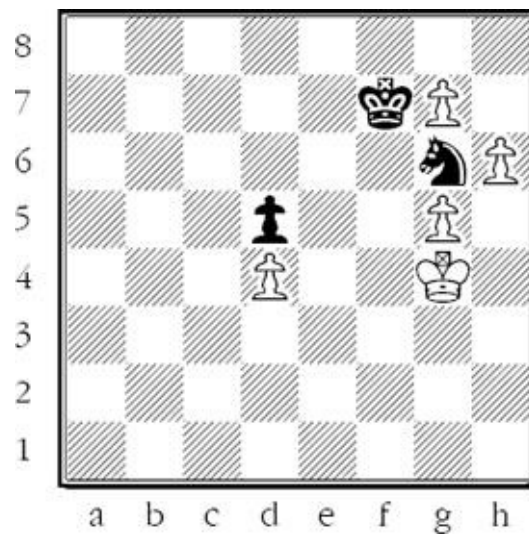
Again, the knight remains pesky.

3.Kg4



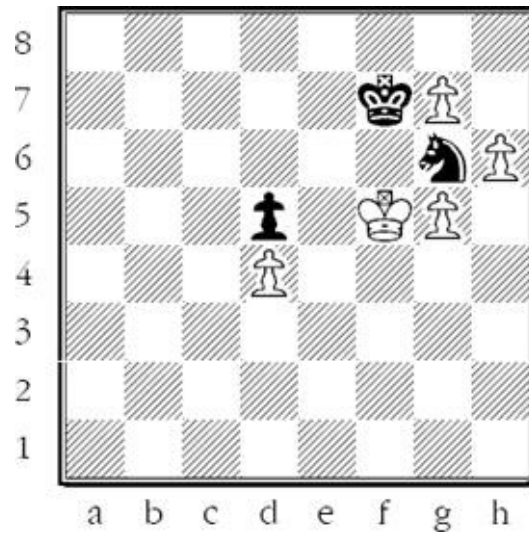
White still threatens to advance the h-pawn.

3...Kf7



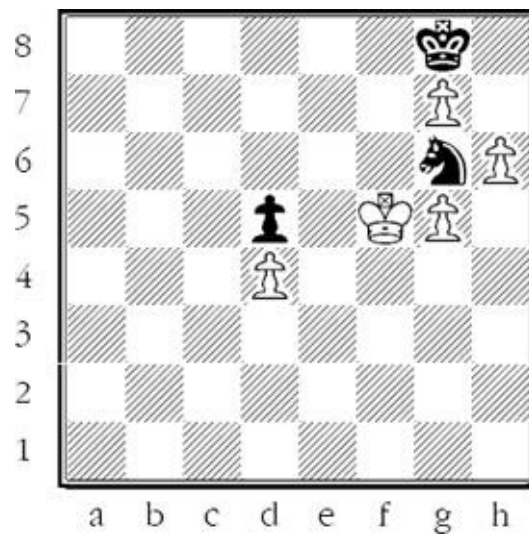
With this retreat Black stops White's pawns from safely going farther.

4.Kf5



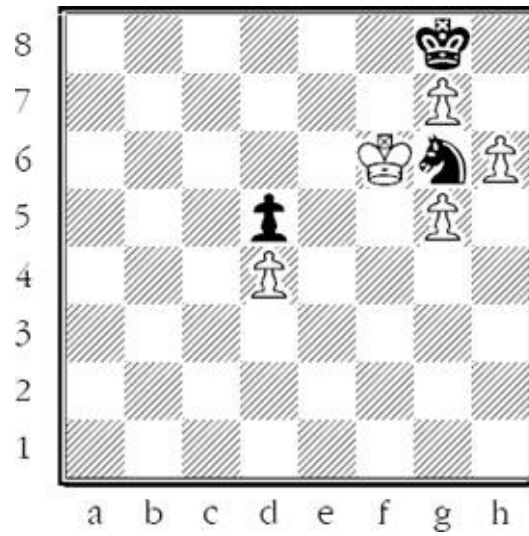
If the knight now moves, White's king gets into e5.

4...Kg8!



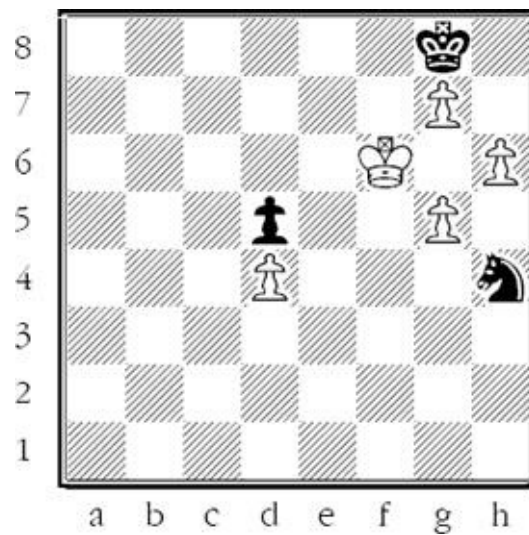
A clever resource: The knight can't be taken because of stalemate.

5.Kf6!



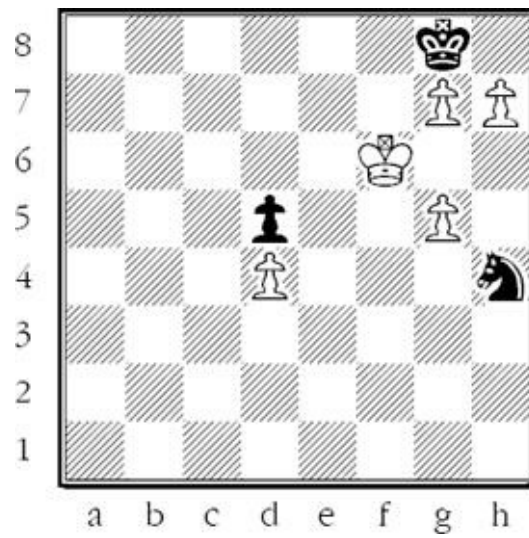
But White can still improve his position by invading thusly.

5...Nh4



On 6.Ke5 Black planned 6...Nf3+.

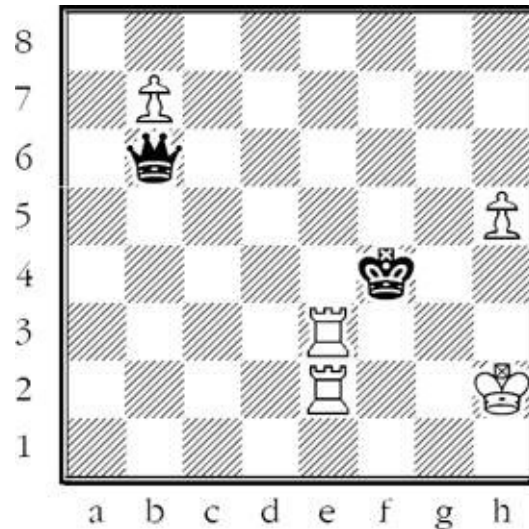
6.h7+!



Decisive! After 6...Kxh7 7.Kf7, it's mate next move. **(1-0)**

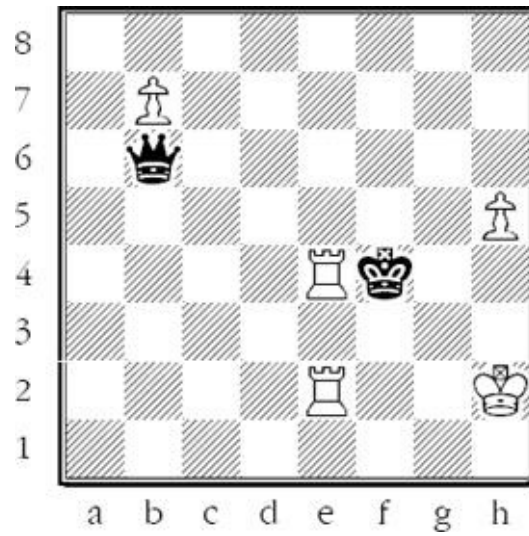
(59) Karpov vs. Anand, 1998

White has rooks and two pawns for a queen



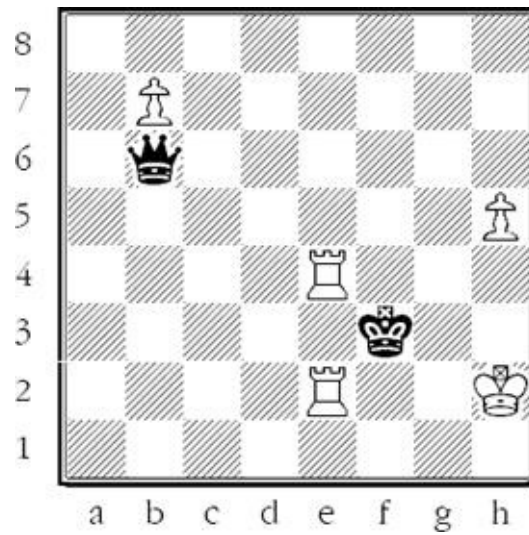
As long as the rooks stay connected, so that they protect each other, probably the best Black could hope for is a draw. Still, the presence of a queen must always be respected. At any moment, a perpetual may loom, and one careless move could hang a rook. Nonetheless, Karpov is not known for hanging rooks or hanging anything, for that matter. He soon brings home the point.

1.Re4+



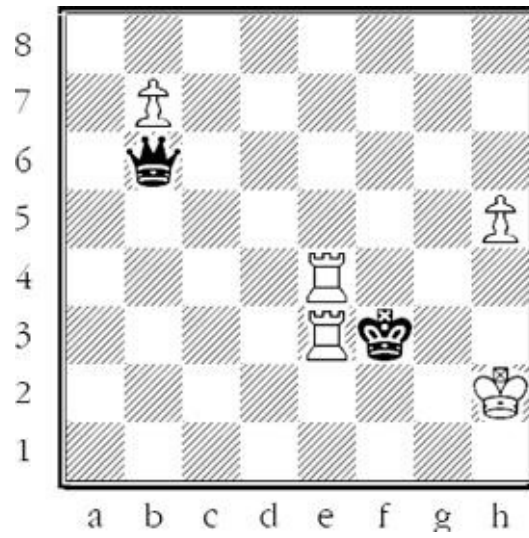
Obviously, Black was not threatening to trade queen for two rooks.

1...Kf3



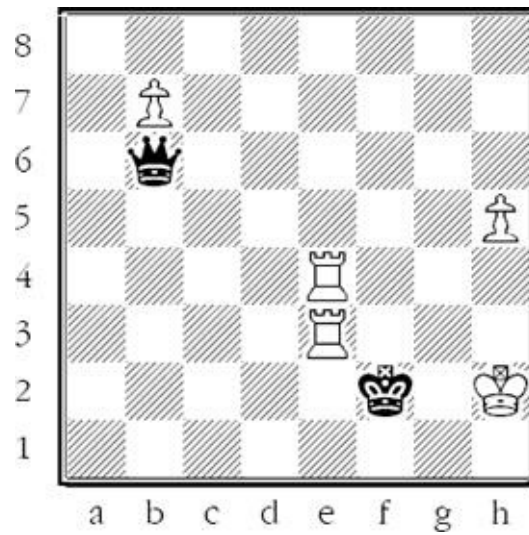
Black keeps his king close to White's, just in case a shot emerges.

2.R2e3+



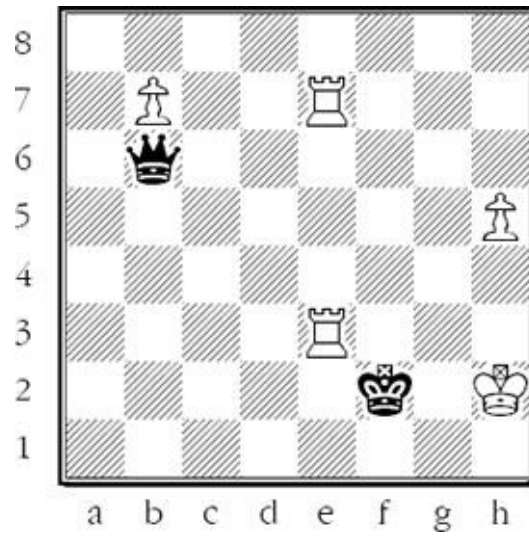
Again, Black cannot let his queen go for the two rooks.

2...Kf2



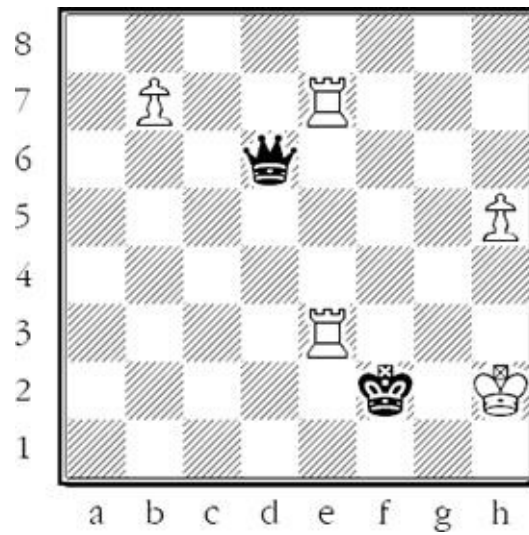
Black's move was preordained by White's last one.

3.Re7



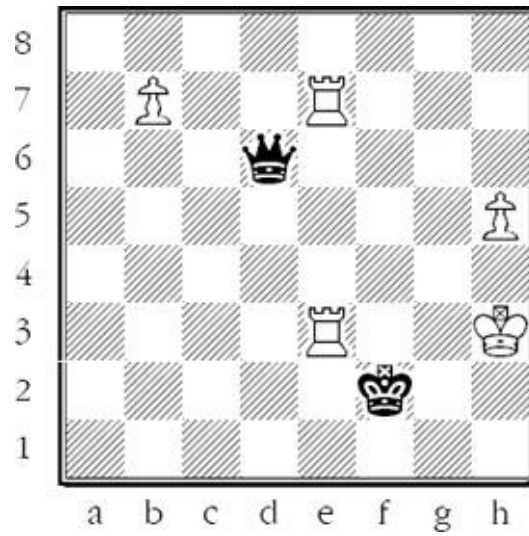
White decides it's time to keep the pawn.

3...Qd6+



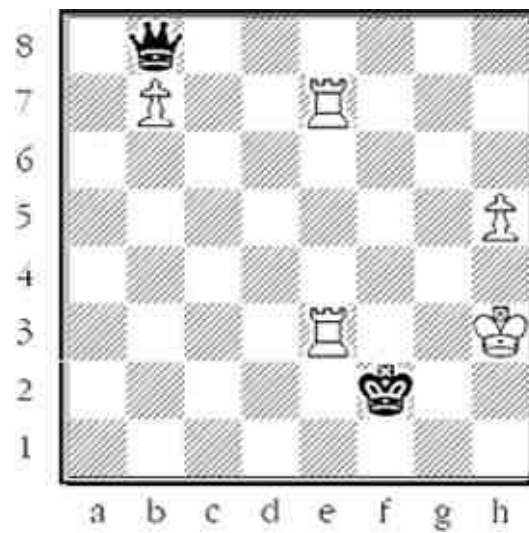
One nice thing about two rooks: they can defend each other.

4.Kh3



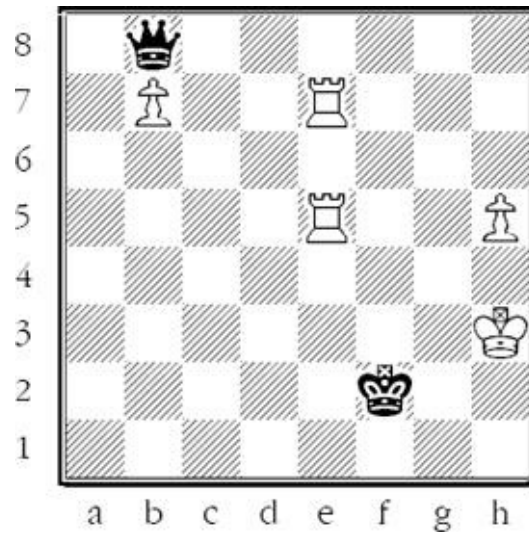
White's king is now out of the checking range.

4...Qb8



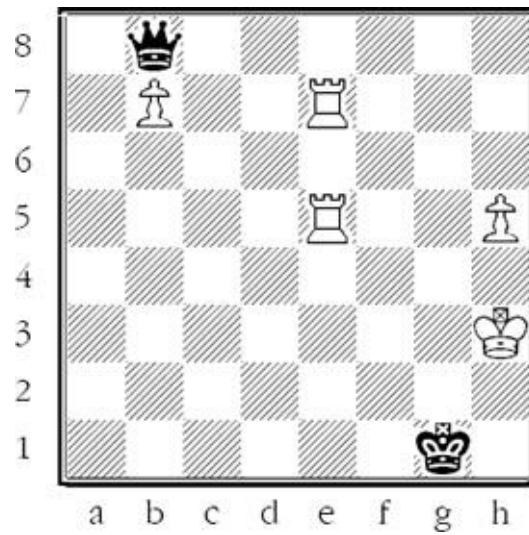
Black keeps in contact with the b-pawn, keeping White's rook tied to the seventh rank.

5.R3e5!



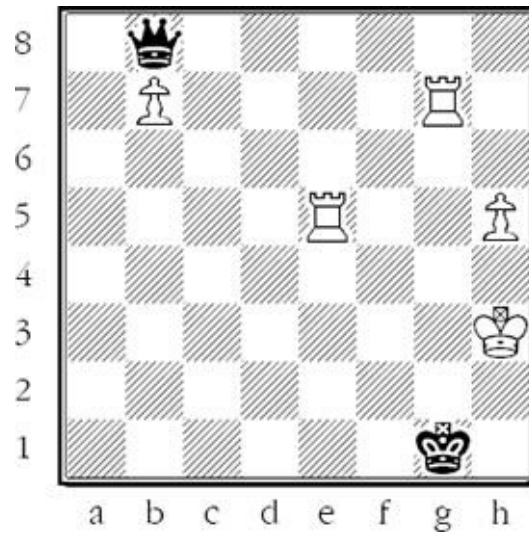
Notice how this centralization stops threats and creates some.

5...Kg1



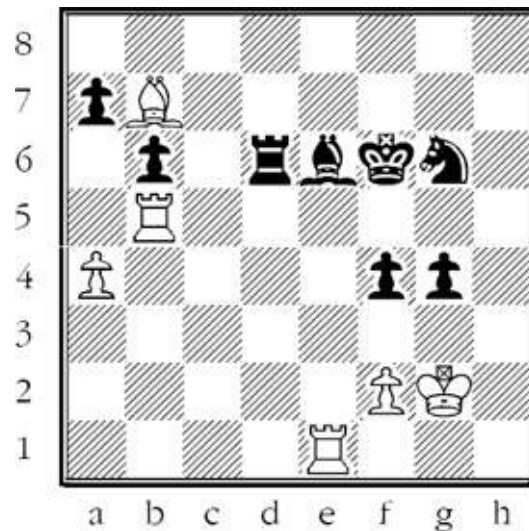
There really wasn't anything worthwhile for Black to do.

6.Rg7+



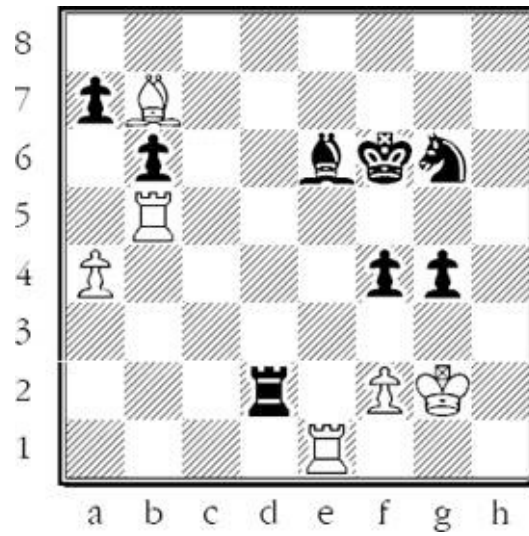
(60) Petursson vs. Anand, 2000

Black has a knight and two pawns for a rook



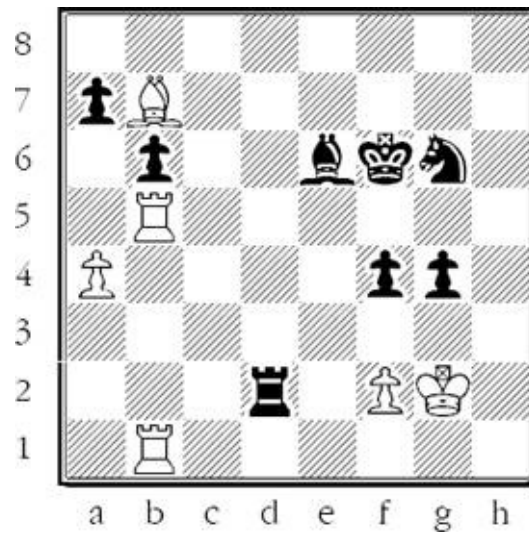
In this imbalanced endgame, Black's coordinated forces have the edge over White's two rooks and bishop. While the main action revolves around the creation of a passed pawn, don't be surprised if that goal is abandoned for something even greater. What's greater than promoting a pawn? Well, surely checkmate, if not a few other things as well. In this game, Black has to settle for checkmate.

1...Rd2



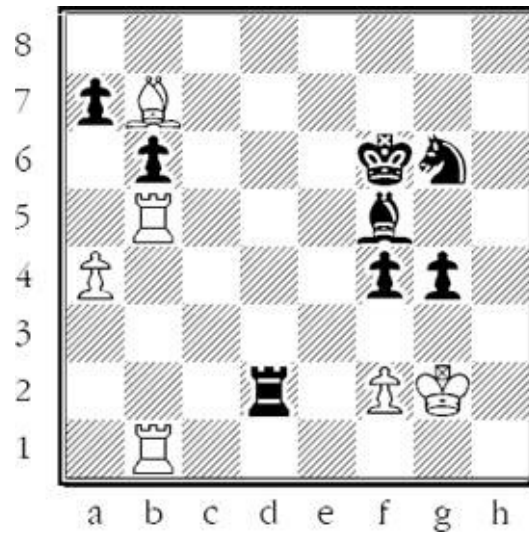
Black invades with a threat to the f-pawn.

2.Reb1



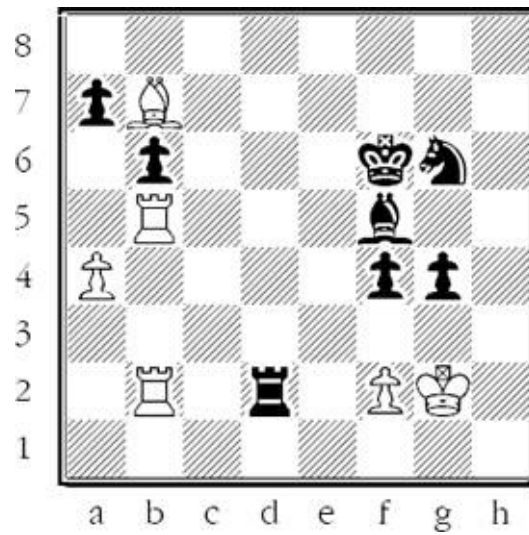
This nullifies the threat, since 3...g3 is met by either rook going to b2.

2...Bf5



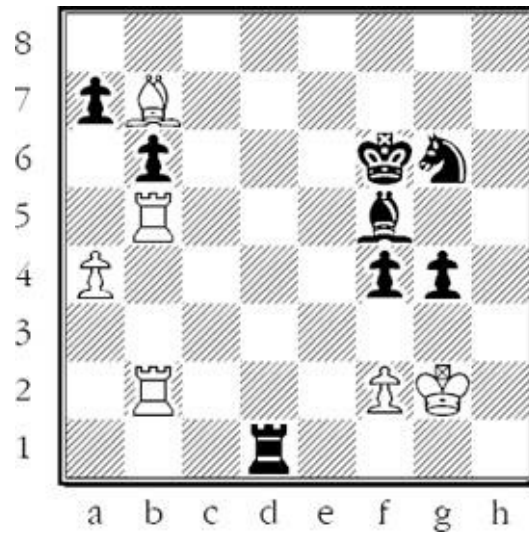
This forces the rook off the first rank.

3.R1b2



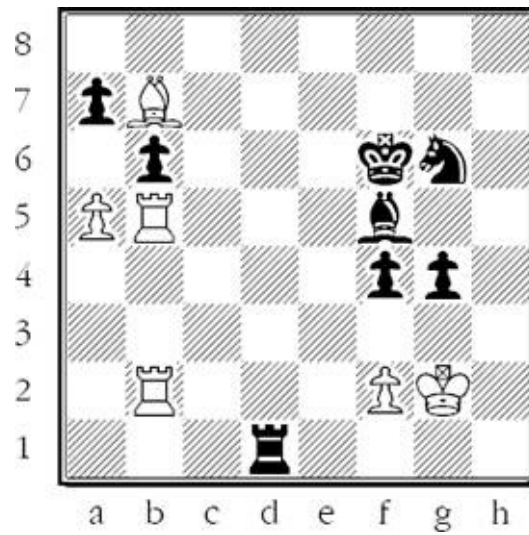
With this move White ends the pin on f2.

3...Rd1



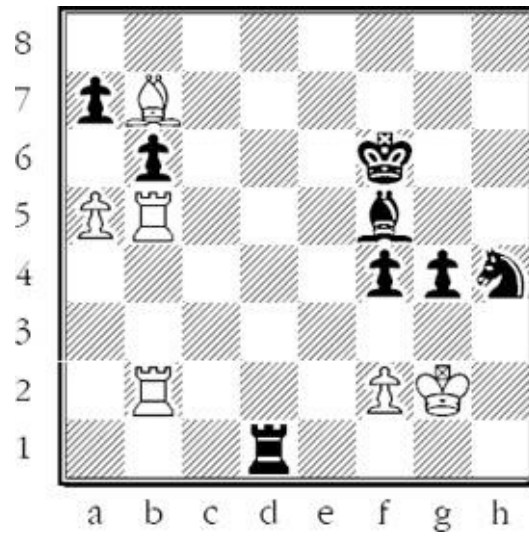
The screws are tightening around White's king.

4.a5



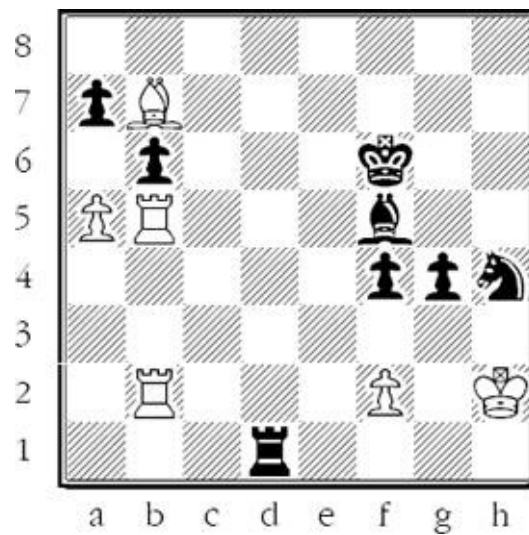
White hopes to break up Black's queenside pawns.

4...Nh4+



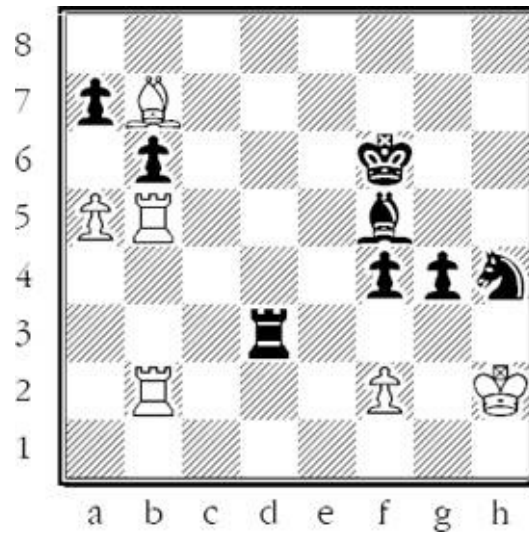
Now the knight invades.

5.Kh2



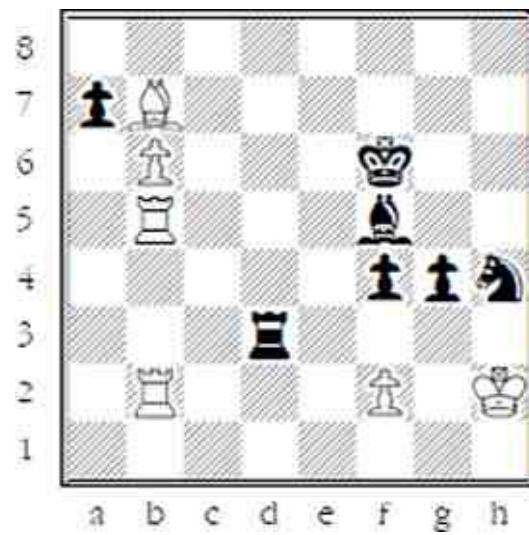
White didn't have any other moves.

5...Rd3!



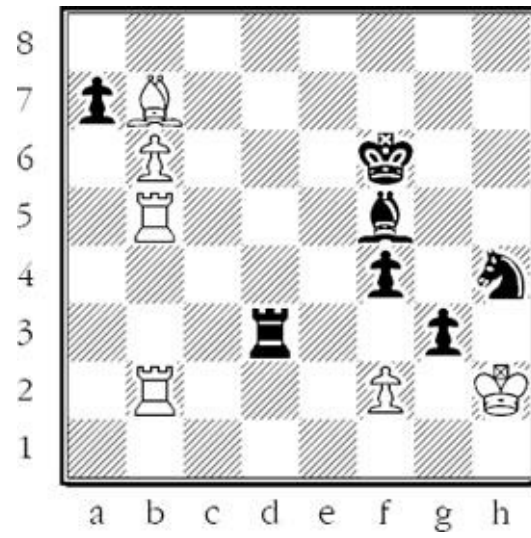
This strong placement sets up a strong threat.

6.axb6?



This loses immediately. A better defense was offered by 6.Rxf5+.

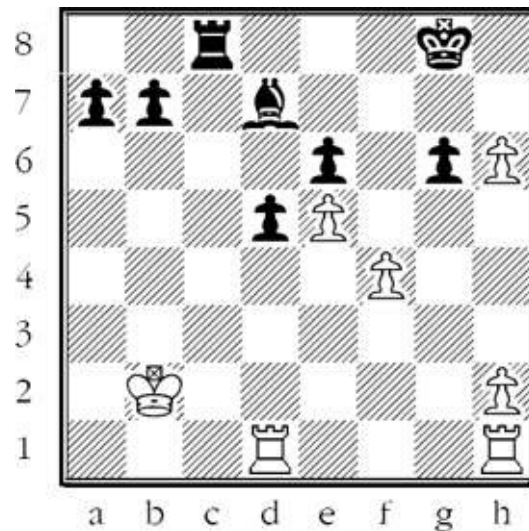
6...g3+



It's mate in two. **(0-1)**

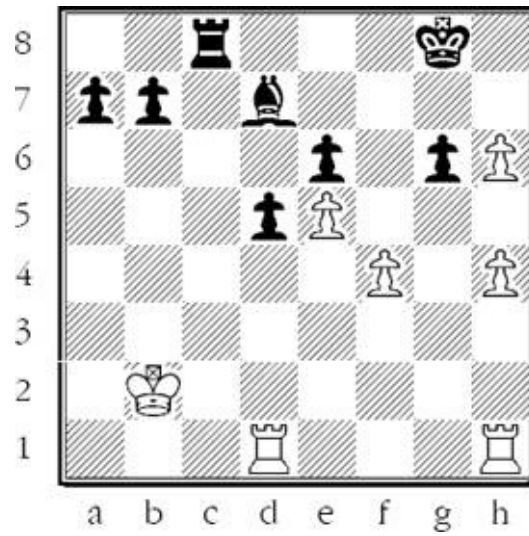
(61) Kasparov vs. Shirov, 2001

White has rook for bishop and pawn



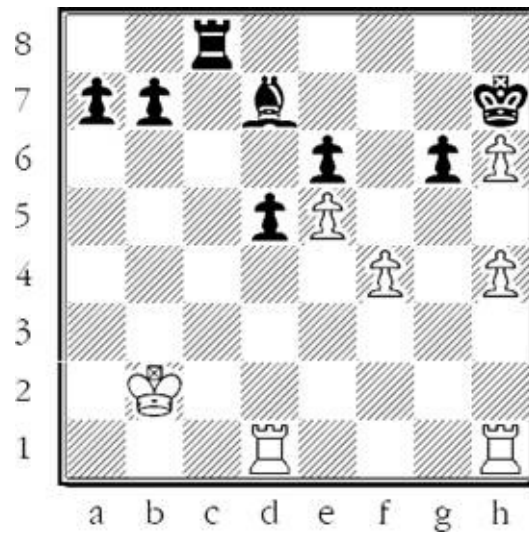
White has a material edge, but Black owns connected pawns on the queenside and the possibility of a little counterplay, if he can get his pawns going and if White plays less than forcibly. There's little chance of that when White is conducted by the great Kasparov. He finds a way to clear the lines and empower his awesome rook army. They quickly do the trick.

1.h4!



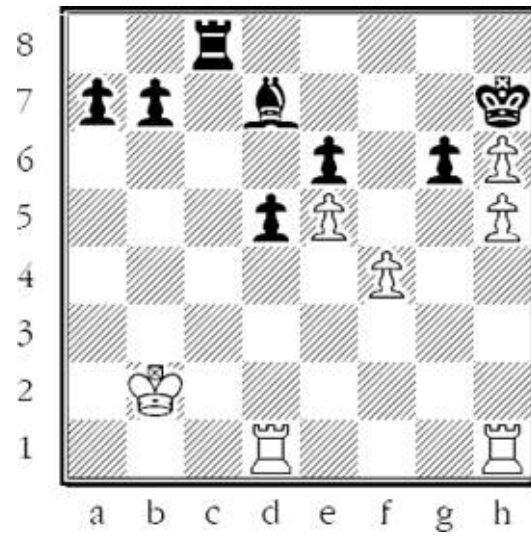
White immediately activates his king-rook.

1...Kh7



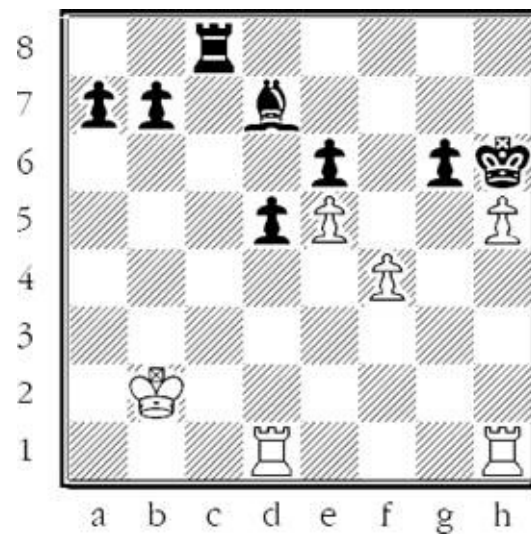
The h6-pawn has seen better days, but that doesn't matter.

2.h5



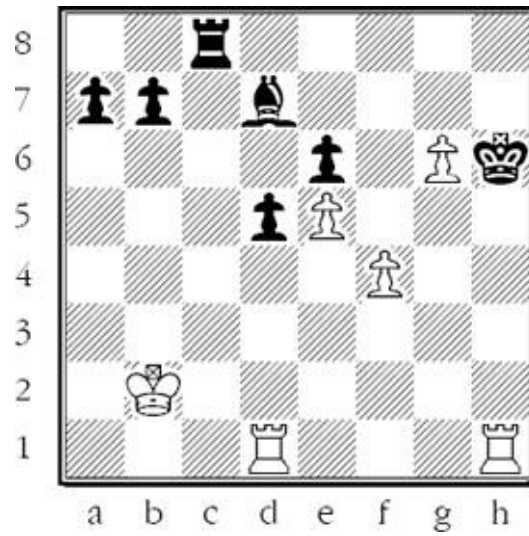
The h-file must be opened.

2...Kxh6



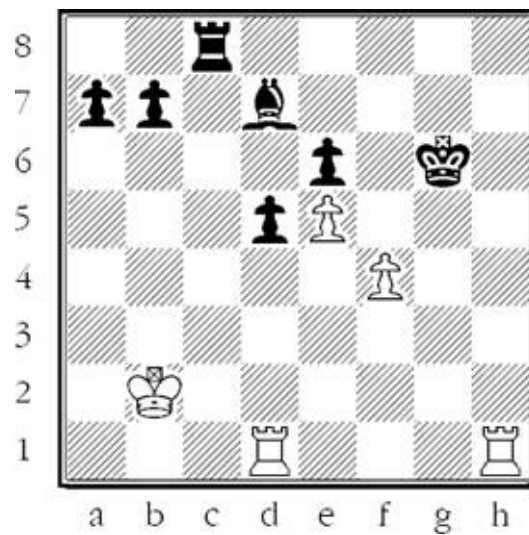
Black now has established material equality.

3.hxg6+



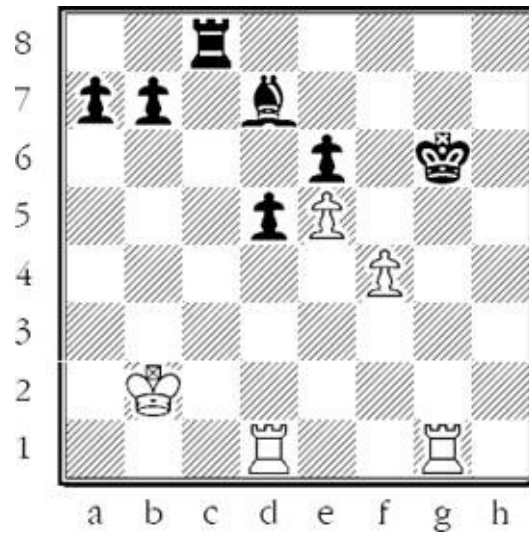
White's plan is realized. The rooks are now ready to roll.

3...Kxg6



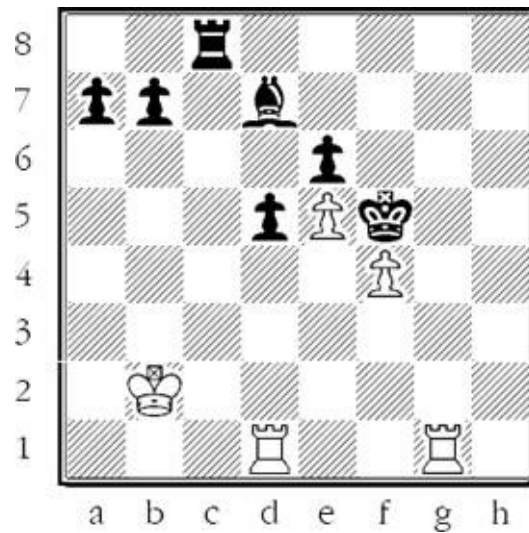
Black sees a chance to martial his king as a fighting piece.

4.Rhg1+



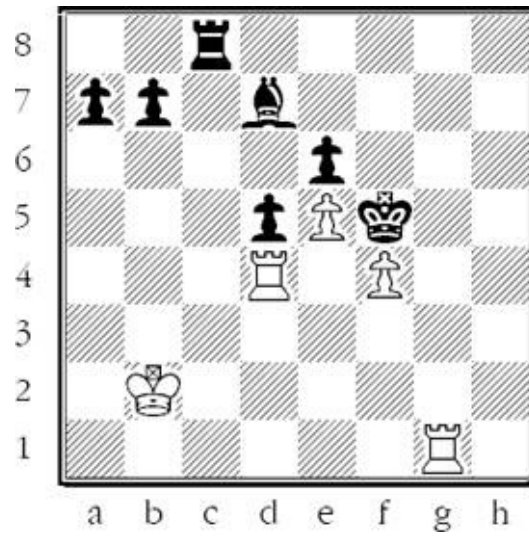
White takes the g-file, since Black's king can't safely go to the h-file.

4...Kf5?



Black thinks he's found shelter and his king can be irritating.

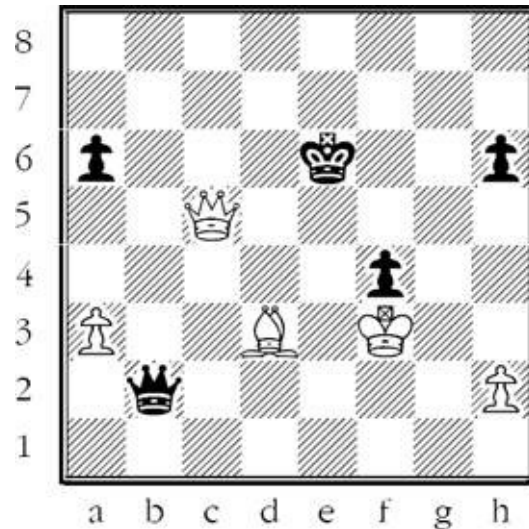
5.Rd4!



But Black has stumbled into a mating net. Mate can only be delayed. **(1-0)**

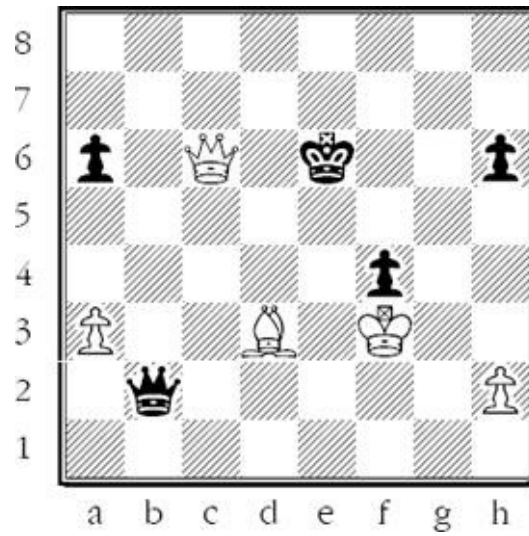
(62) Carlsen vs. Trygstad, 2003

White is up a bishop for a pawn



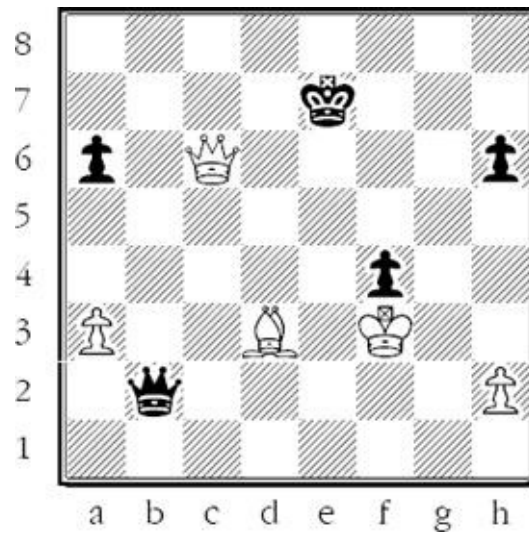
Not only is there no logical way for White to lose this game – that is, on Earth – but it’s doubtful whether Black can survive under these precarious conditions. Even so, there’s a little mystery in the air, trying to envision the possible ending. White has a queen, bishop, king, and a little magic on his side. With Black’s help, it soon works out very nicely for White.

1.Qc6+



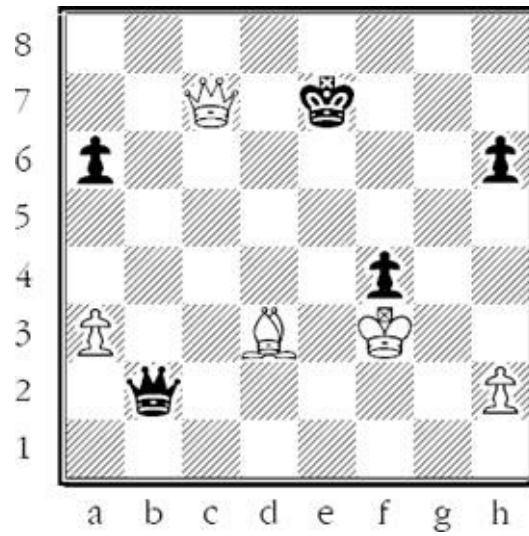
White attacks two pawns, but this isn't what the matter is about.

1...Ke7



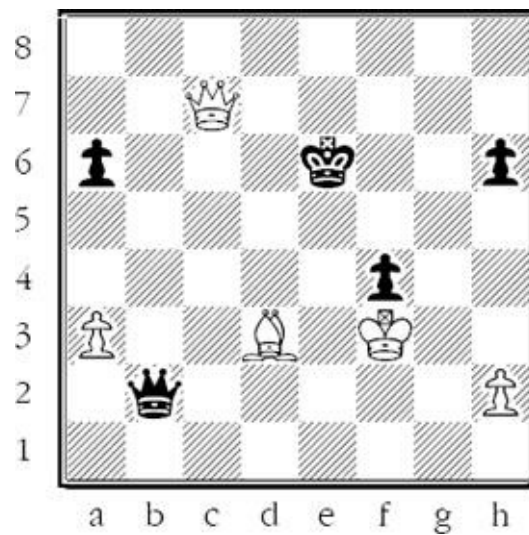
Black's king stays centralized. Ordinarily, it's harder to get mated in the center.

2.Qc7+



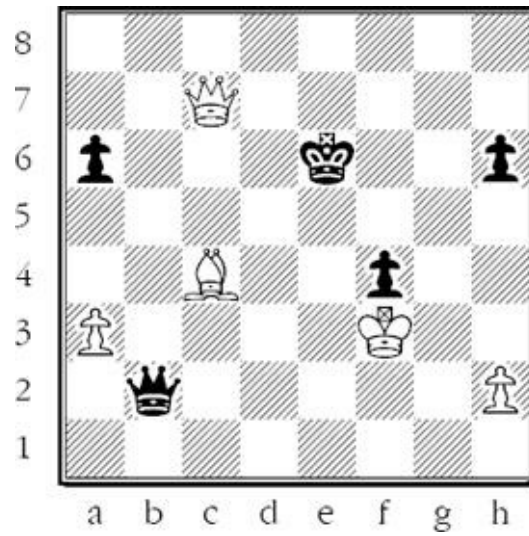
White seeks a joining of his queen and bishop in cooperative attack.

2...Ke6



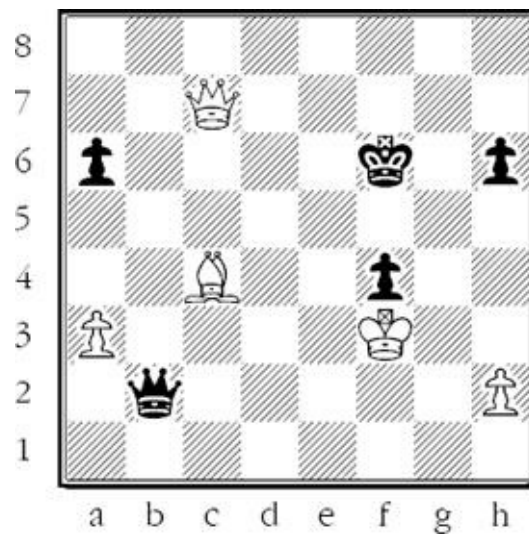
Now the bishop can indeed participate.

3.Bc4+



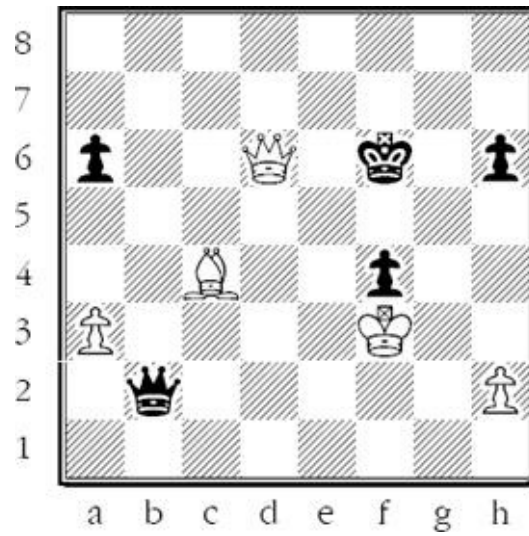
No Vulcan mind-meld here, just some nice working together.

3...Kf6



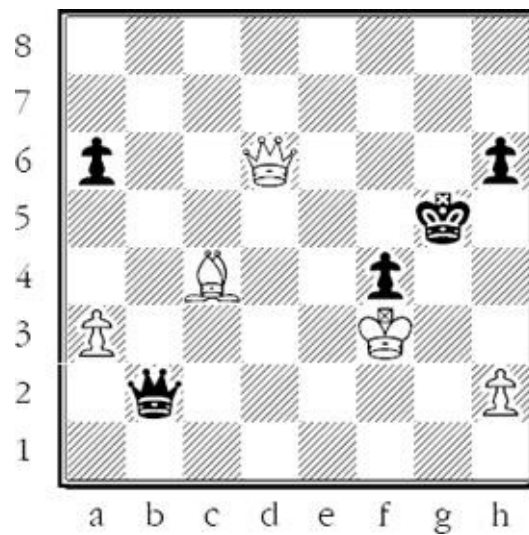
Black could have gone to f6 on the previous move as well.

4.Qd6+



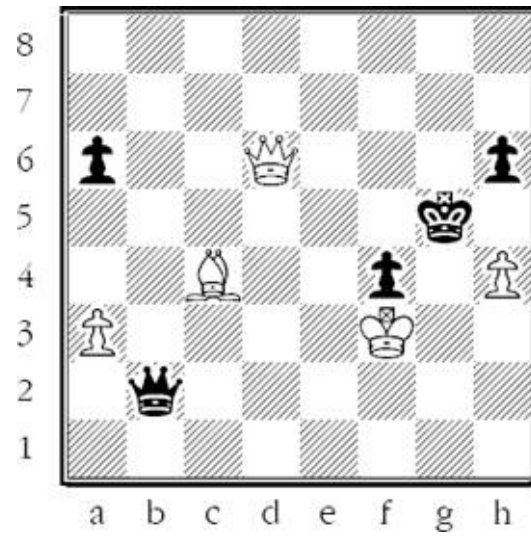
White also had 4.Qf7+, which mates or wins the queen.

4...Kg5



White can win the f-pawn with check, but he has better.

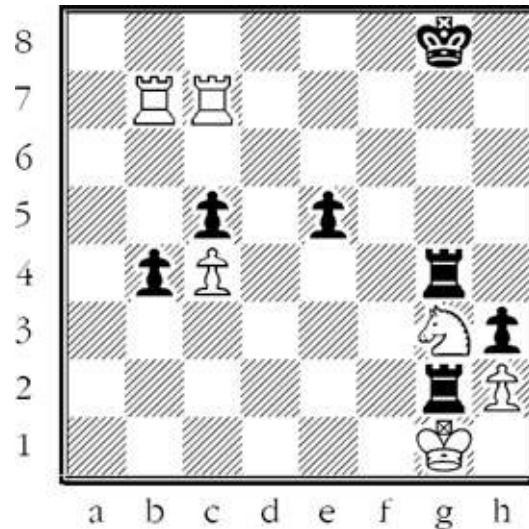
5.h4+!



It's mate in two moves. **(1-0)**

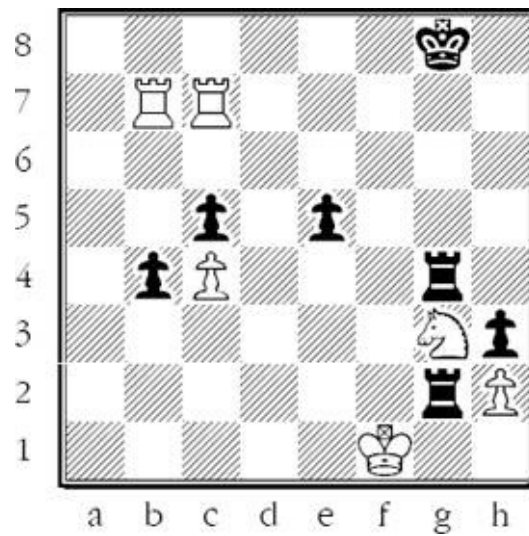
(63) Anand vs. Morozevich, 2007

White has a knight for two pawns



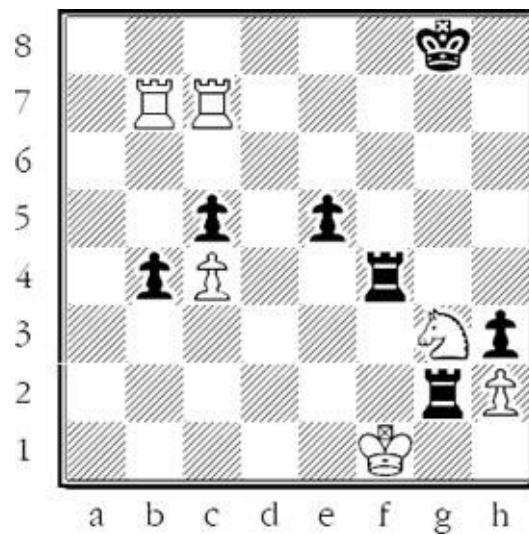
White is ahead a knight for two pawns, but rooks are flying. Black has a rook on his 7th rank, and White has two on his own seventh rank. It's something like seventh heaven. White is also in check, and that means he must get out of check. After he does that, Black must decide what to do. Does he take the h-pawn and try to weather the storm? Well, he tries.

1.Kf1



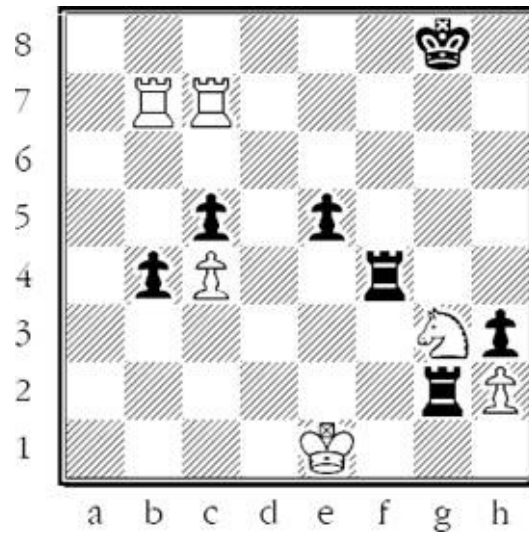
Moving the king to h1 might lead to back rank trouble.

1...Rf4+



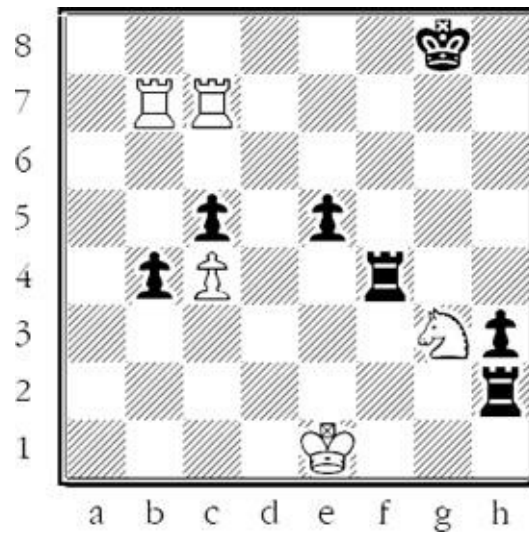
Here White doesn't have a choice. His king must play to e1.

2.Ke1



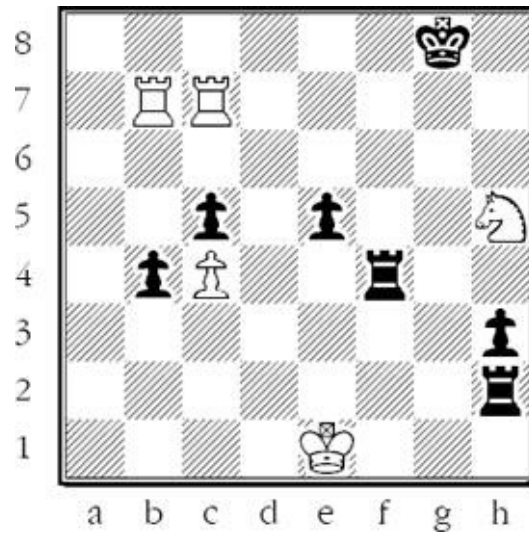
White is not yet breathing easily.

2...Rxf2



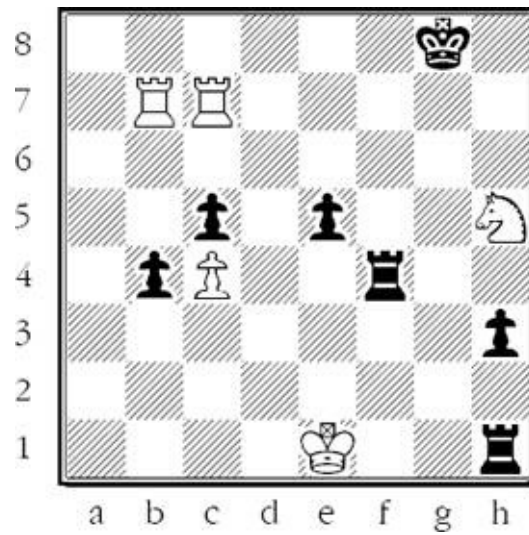
Feeling secure against mate, Black takes a pawn. Maybe he can soon promote.

3.Nh5!



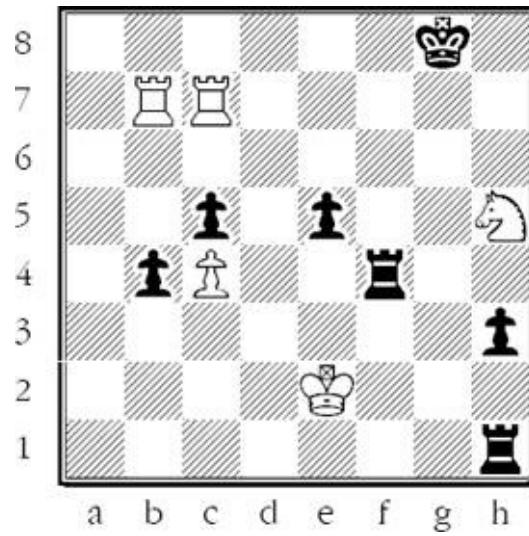
This is a strong move, which threatens a few things.

3...Rh1+



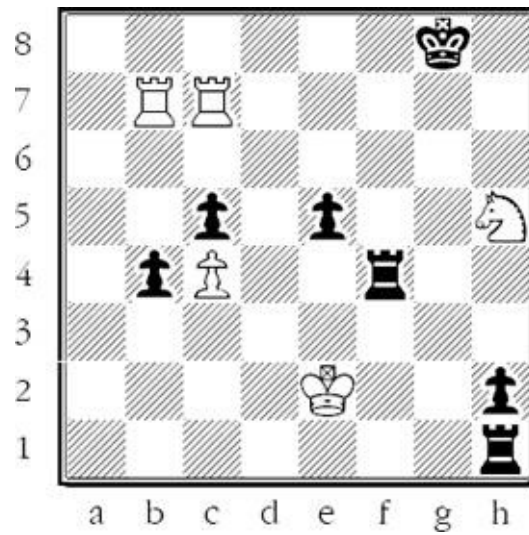
This forces White's king onto its second rank.

4.Ke2



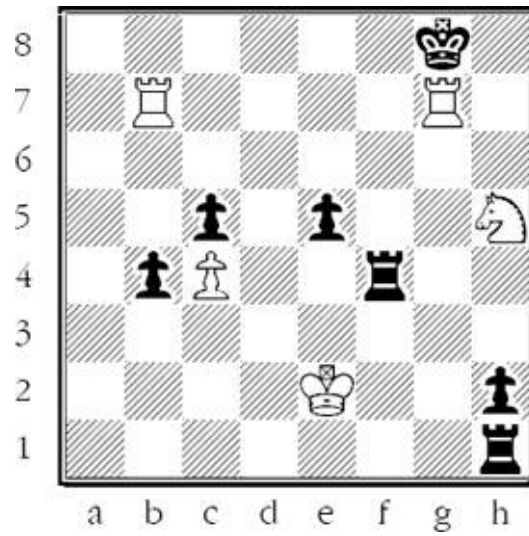
On 4...Rh2+ White has 5.Ke3.

4...h2



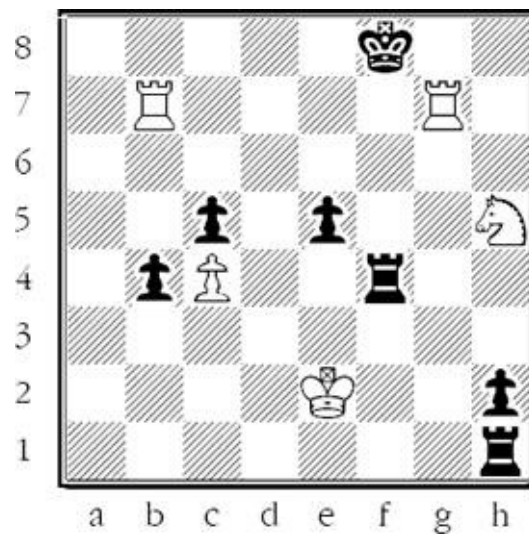
Black ignores the threat to his f4-rook, hoping to promote.

5.Rg7+



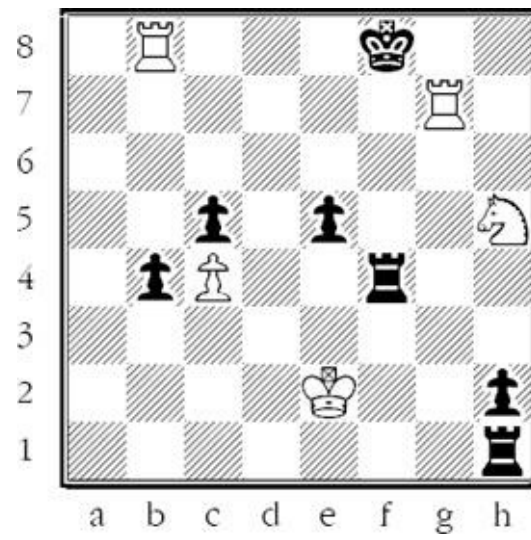
This decides the issue. Black gets mated.

5...Kf8



Mate could have been delayed for a move by 5...Kh8.

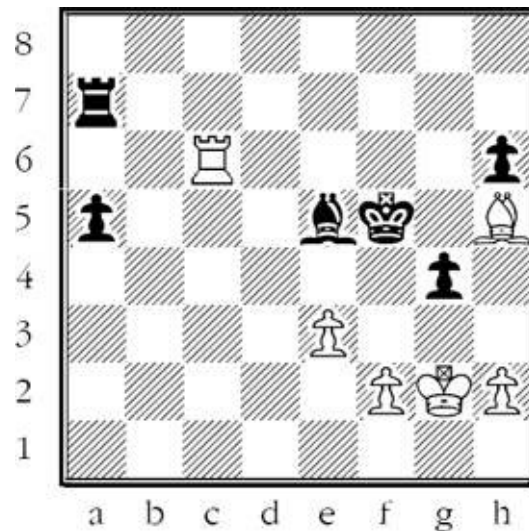
6.Rb8 mate



Black is out of moves. That's the odd thing about mate. (1-0)

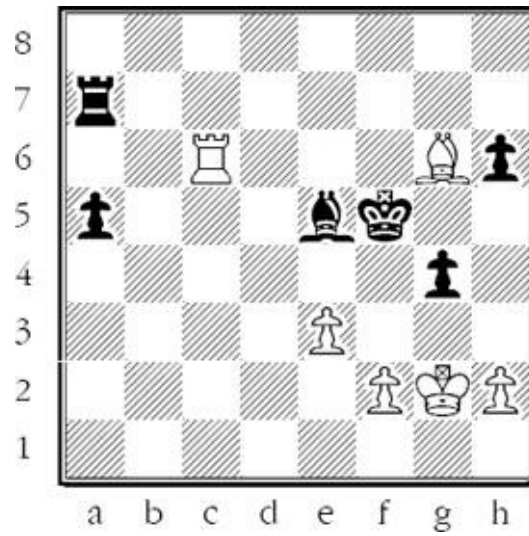
(64) Carlsen vs. Shirov, 2008

White is even



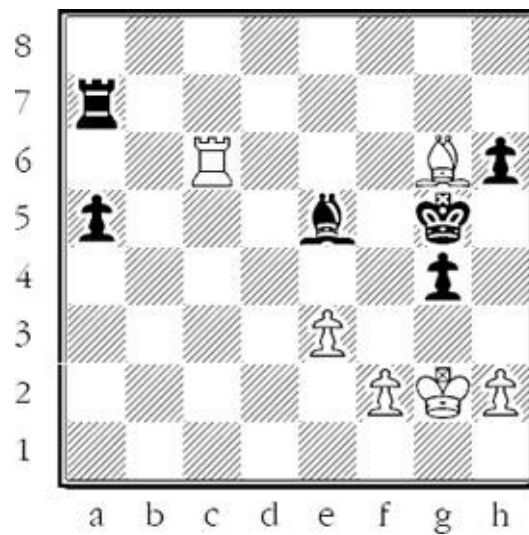
The position is materially even, the bishops are of opposite color, and Black has an outside passed pawn. But there are two other factors of note: White has the move, and Black's king is a little encased. Perhaps the black king could become active. It's all a matter of coordinating the rook and bishop. Carlsen does it magnificently.

1.Bg6+



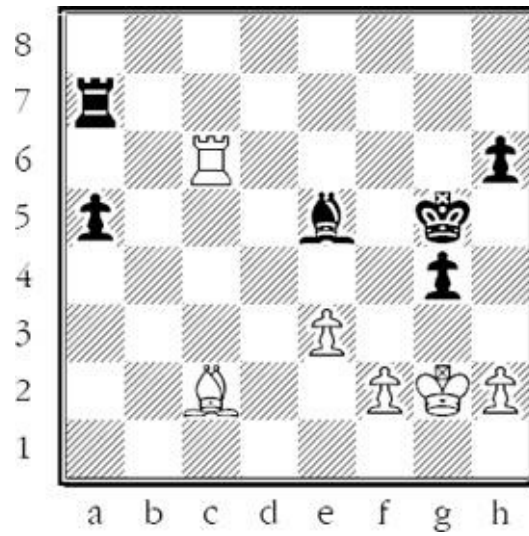
White prevents Black's king from using e4.

1...Kg5



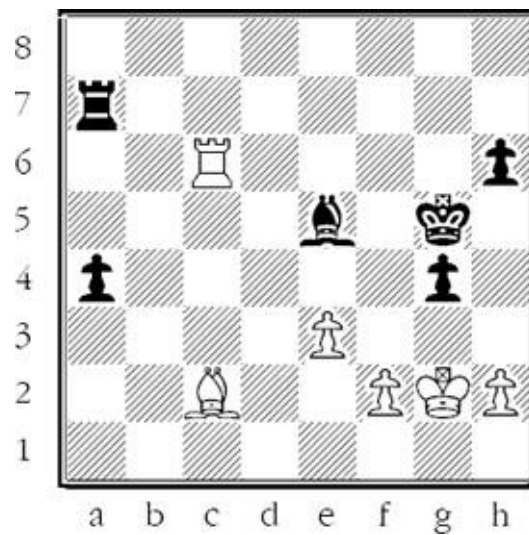
This is the only move Black had.

2.Bc2



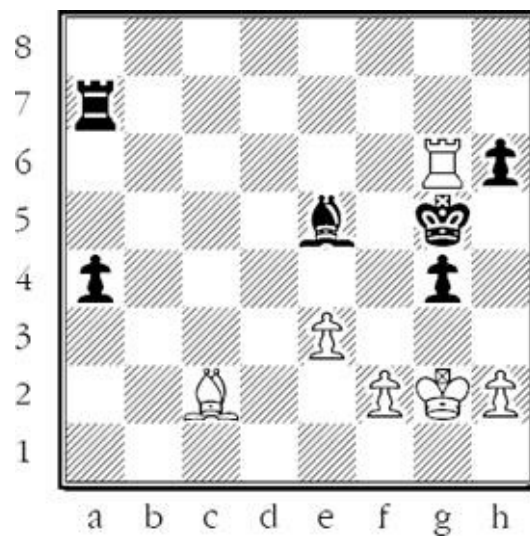
This frees White's rook and keeps on eye on a4.

2...a4



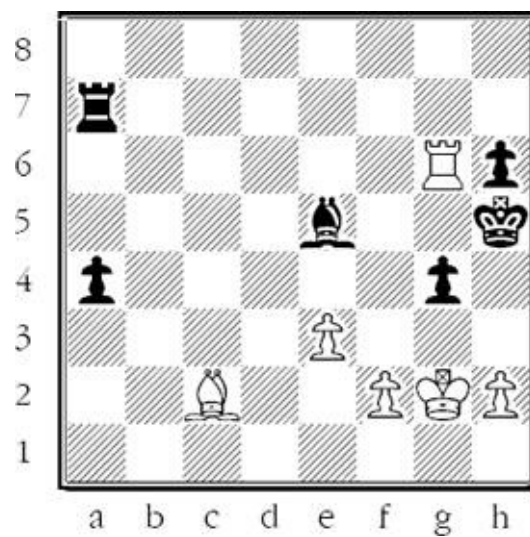
It's hard to overcome the maxim "passed pawns must be pushed."

3.Rg6+



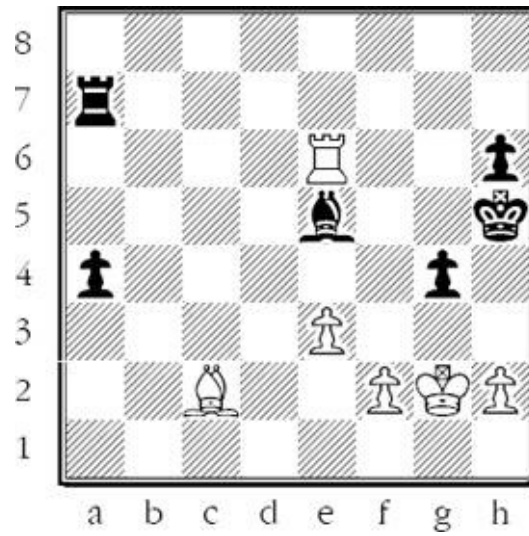
Black's king is forced to the edge.

3...Kh5



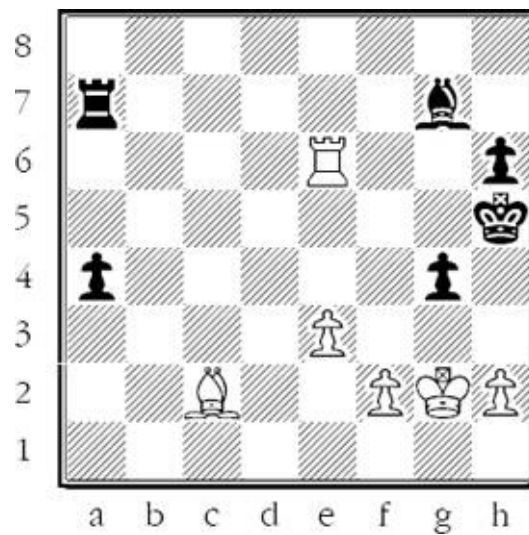
The try 3...Kh4 loses the h-pawn with check.

4.Re6



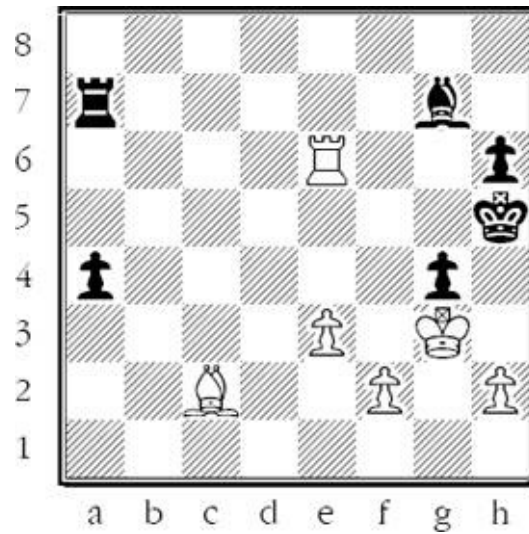
White gains time on the bishop.

4...Bg7



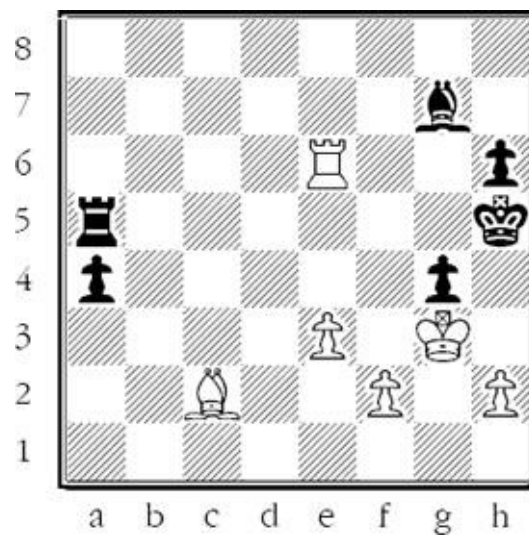
The bishop surrenders the h2-b8 diagonal.

5.Kg3



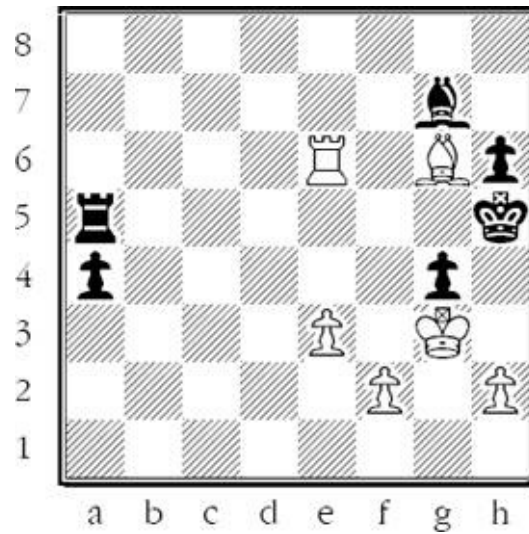
White eyes an attempt at winning the g-pawn. Actually, he has something insidious in mind.

5...Ra5



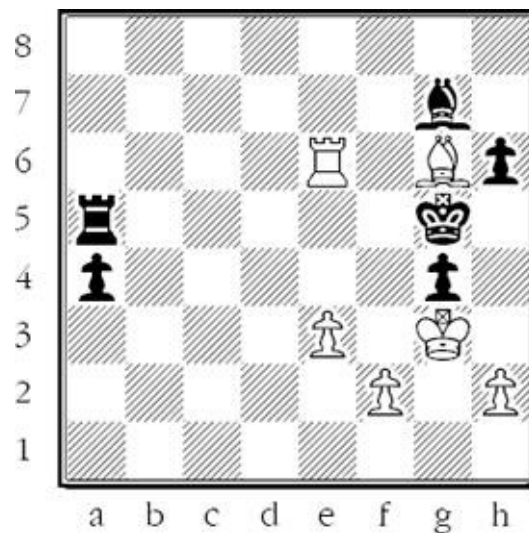
If 6.Rg6 Black has 6...Rg5.

6.Bg6+!



The g6-square is a fulcrum of activity.

6...Kg5



This too was Black's only move, but he resigns anyway, since either pawn check mates next move. **(1-0)**

Some Endgame Advice and Observations

1 Even as early as the opening, start thinking about the types of endgames that might arise. Pay attention to pawn structures, good and bad pieces, strong and weak squares, important setups and placements. To help in this regard, continually monitor and evaluate the situation, taking note of meaningful changes and tasks yet to fulfill. Keep an ongoing list in your mind, updating it as needed.

2 As you approach the endgame, try to keep good pieces while trading off bad ones. Aim to have minor pieces that are more effective than your opponent's. Strive to have the right minor piece for the conditions likely to ensue, such as a bishop that can control a rook-pawn's promotion square. Overall, be aware of how the pawn structure may impact the remaining minor pieces. Generally prefer bishops, especially with pawns on both sides of the board. Consider retaining a knight if there are structural impediments or if squares of both colors need to be influenced. But keep in mind that knights fare badly when contending against rook-pawns. Clearly, as knights near the board's edge, they have less operating space. Especially be observant to the attraction of gaining the advantage of having two bishops against bishop and knight (or against two knights).

3 Where possible, try to create favorable pawn majorities that will more easily produce passed pawns. If ahead, try to keep pawns on both sides of the board, so that you have greater flexibility and more options. If defending in such situations, try to trade off the pawns on the more burdened wing, to lessen the demands on your defending forces. In mobilizing a pawn majority, normally employ *Capablanca's rule*: Advance the unopposed pawn first.

4 Refrain from weakening pawn moves. They tend to be permanent. Avoid

accepting isolated or backward pawns, especially those that tie down your forces to defensive posts or burdensome assignments. Generally, the fewer pawn islands you have, the better.

5 If facing a dangerous passed pawn, try to blockade it or render it harmless. Knights and kings tend to be good blockaders. Rooks are terrible blockaders. Not only can they be attacked diagonally, but by being reduced to blockade, they lose mobility and the potential for activity.

6 If you have doubled or weak pawns, try to trade them off for healthy pawns. If your opponent has weak pawns, shy away from trades that solve your opponent's problems. Don't trade for your opponent's weak pawns: win them!

7 If you have a bishop, avoid placing your pawns on the same color the bishop travels on. Such obstructions decrease the bishop's scope and leave nagging weaknesses on squares of the other color. If your opponent has a bishop, try to fix pawns on the same color on which it travels to impede the bishop's movement and capability.

8 If practical, keep at least one or two pawns unmoved. In this way you can gain or lose a tempo when desired. That is you'll have the option of advancing a yet-unmoved pawn one or two squares ahead, so that you can shift the tempo in your favor. Accordingly, be cognizant of certain critical positions that may require such temporizing play. For the most part, pieces that move on lines can gain a tempo by moving to a safe place along the line they already occupy. Thus they still continue to control the key line or squares. Knights, however, can't in themselves gain a tempo, inasmuch as every time they move they guard entirely different squares. Kings can often lose a move by triangulating. Queens can also triangulate, especially from a central station.

9 Activate the king as the endgame looms, especially if the queens have been

exchanged. Usually this consists of bringing the king back to the center. From there it will have greater flexibility, with more opportunities to support actions and defend vulnerable points. Particularly stay focused on the relationship between the two kings as they move toward each other. Having the dominant king could prove integral to winning or defending. Keep in mind “the opposition,” remembering that it’s a negative concept. That is, once the kings stand in opposition (for the most part, though not always, separated by an odd number of squares along the line they both occupy, with the kings being on squares of the same color), that it’s usually advantageous to go second. To be sure, by going second, your king can possibly choose to play aggressively (invading) or defensively (holding off the enemy king). There’s another way to look at this relationship. In many comparable situations, the two sides fight to set up *zugzwang*, a situation in which neither player wishes to move.

10 In pure pawn endings, when it comes to promoting a particular pawn, identify that pawn’s critical square(s) – the square or squares the promoting side’s king must be able to occupy in order to ensure the pawn’s promotion. Bear in mind that the defending king doesn’t have to occupy any of the critical squares. Rather it merely has to be able to prevent the attacking king from occupying any of them.

11 The maxim says that “passed pawns must be pushed,” but don’t be rash. Advance a passed pawn intelligently and in a timely way. Be sure that your pieces, including and often especially your king, can support its advance if necessary. To this end it’s typically desirable to clear a path for a passed pawn before advancing it. This can be done by first gaining control of the squares the pawn must pass over, making the safe escort of the pawn more likely. Additionally, place greater value on the outside passed pawn, which in many situations can be used as a decoy to lure away enemy forces, above all the opposing king.

12 Rooks serve well on important open files, thus the maxim “rooks belong on open files.” It’s often advantageous to put at least one rook on the seventh rank. Such placement frequently attacks a row of pawns and tends to have a confining effect on the enemy king. Once a rook has seized an open file, try to strengthen its hold on the file by doubling rooks. To secure a file it may be helpful to prevent the opponent from placing a countering rook on it. Make sure to avoid trades that wind up surrendering control of pertinent lines, especially useful files. When preferable, place rooks in cutoff positions, preventing the enemy king from approaching while possibly keeping it trapped. Where productive, widen the breath of the cutoff to reduce the king further. If defending, try to escape or break the cutoff to allow the king to get back into action. When a cutoff is abandoned, it’s typically a good idea to re-involve the defensive king as soon as practicable.

13 If you have a choice, whether defending or attacking, try to position your own rook behind an advancing pawn, not in front of it. In this manner, as the pawn in question advances, the mobility of a rook placed behind it increases. Meanwhile, the mobility of a rook placed in front of such a pawn decreases. This principle is embodied in the maxim: Rooks belong behind passed pawns.

14 If your rook must defend from the flank, try to place it on the long side of the pawn, keeping the short side for your king. Rooks are long-range pieces preferring separation to be safely involved. Indeed, position your rook as far away from the enemy king as possible. In this way the rook is able to function more fully without fear of being approached by the enemy king. Seek the “checking distance,” which is the minimum distance a rook needs from its object to perform at full power (generally, four squares from rook to target). By staying sufficiently away from the opposing king, the rook tends to avoid the consequences of unexpected tactics, such as deflecting or skewering checks from the opposing rook. If trying to escape such rook checks, look to flight squares

(places for a king to hide) or ways to block the checks with your own rook. “Building a bridge,” or obstructing the checking line with a friendly rook, denotes a technique for doing this.

15 If ahead, especially by a pawn or two, try to exchange off pieces to emphasize your advantage. But in certain endings in particular, such as minor piece endgames, be careful not to trade off too many pawns, leaving just one friendly pawn on the board. Your opponent might be able to sacrifice his remaining minor piece, reducing to a position where you’re ahead, but have insufficient mating material. Thus we have the maxim: When ahead, trade pieces; when behind, trade pawns.

16 If losing, or behind in material, avoid trades that ease your opponent’s tasks. If possible, head for endgames with bishops of opposite color. Also look to create defensive fortresses, where lesser forces can hold off and stifle superior ones, or positional draws, where no real progress can be made without incurring significant risk. Unless you’re sure it works, avoid passive play. Seek counterattack and active resistance. In rook endings especially, it may be necessary to sacrifice a pawn or two to keep your rook active and to make its presence felt.

17 As a rule, endorse ways to accomplish goals with minimal loss of time and maximum efficiency. But as the maxim says, “don’t hurry,” unless, of course, you’re racing to queen a pawn first or must implement a tactical operation that can’t wait.

18 Where possible, create connected passed pawns and protected passed pawns. These tend to give you more options by releasing your king and other pieces from defense. Such pawn complexes generally reduce burdens and enable friendly pieces to move about more liberally.

19 As you enter an endgame revolving around the queens, try to establish your queen in a more centralized post. Such a placement generally reduces the ability and the attack power of the opposing queen. If you are losing a queen ending, try to place your own queen annoyingly in the center. Look for the possibility of giving a perpetual check. If you have sparse forces still on the board, scout out ways to bring about stalemate. Keep an eye on ditching your remaining material in just the right way and with precise timing to bring about stalemate.

20 If you have a superior position, but haven't yet won anything, keep up the pressure until you constrain winning concessions. There's no need to rush in such situations, barring tactical necessity. Of enormous value is an advantage in space, usually determined by having farther advanced pawns, especially in the center. This tends to give the more spacious side greater room to shift and maneuver. Meanwhile, by keeping up the pressure, and maintaining the space edge, the defender, having limited mobility, may not be able to cover all vulnerable material and distressed key squares satisfactorily. With defending pieces colliding and interfering with each other, there's a good chance they won't be able to function suitably enough to keep everything upheld.

21 Don't be afraid to repeat certain positions where you have the upper hand to see how your opponent responds, as long as you retain control of the situation. In other words, give your opponent a chance to go wrong. Sometimes this can be facilitated by creating a fresh weakness before the final action, so that your opponent winds up hampered by added troubles. At the decisive point, the increased taxing might prove too much to bear. To remind us of this possibility, sages have colorfully described this action as the "principle of two weaknesses." Sometimes two can be three.

22 Once you've promoted a pawn, play for immediate checkmate with your extra force. Unless there is a specific reason for removing certain material, don't dither about, for example, by trying to capture the opponent's remaining pawns.

Otherwise, you might stumble into a surprise stalemate or other drawing stratagem such as a perpetual check. Worse, you might suddenly get mated yourself.

23 If you have a winning endgame, don't play too quickly. Work as hard at realizing the win as you did to get ahead in the first place. We must reiterate the wise maxim: Don't hurry. Moreover, if ahead by several pawns, don't be afraid to give back a pawn, as long as you retain your overall advantage and if it also leads to useful simplification. Furthermore, make sure not to go after bad pawns. That is, do not go "pawn grabbing." It might result in loss of control. For the most part, control is what it's about. But surely keep your attention focused on the loose pawn (or anything possibly hanging), waiting for an opportune moment to pounce.

24 Be watchful of all the advantages you have by constant review and reappraisal of the developing situation. Indeed, you might be able to surrender a particular superiority for another kind of advantage having enhanced significance in the evolving circumstances. Consequently, be sensitive to the prospect of favorable transformations, converting the intangible into the tangible or the greater.

25 If you have a losing endgame, take a few minutes out to assess what the true circumstances are. Be objective, and even optimistic, so that you can draw upon your wherewithal to make it as difficult as possible for your opponent to win. Hunt for ways to pose continuing problems. And please, once again, don't hasten your moves. By slowing it down, your opponent, who no longer may wish to fight (unconsciously figuring he's already won the battle), might move too quickly and too recklessly. Superficial play on your opponent's part could precipitate inaccuracies and outright blundering, and that's surely a means to get back in the game.

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